

Genocide Awareness and Prevention

Month Toolkit

April 2014



stand



enough

The project to end genocide and crimes against humanity



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ONE LIFE AT A TIME.**
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the auschwitz institute
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Investors

Against Genocide



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**U.S. CAMPAIGN
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**AMERICANS
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DEMOCRACY**



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Introduction

April is designated as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month each year, as it marks important anniversaries for multiple acts of genocide in the 20th century. Throughout the month, people and organizations join together to commemorate and honor victims and survivors, educate the public about previous and contemporary genocides, and advocate for prevention against future mass atrocities.

The term “genocide” was coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944. The atrocities committed during the Holocaust shocked and outraged the global community and for first time in history, genocide was seen as an affront, an infraction on the preeminent right of all human beings to life. Together, the world said “Never Again,” and yet failed to commit to that promise. [Visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum website to learn more.](#)

Since the Holocaust, genocides and systematic mass killings have been committed in places as diverse as Bosnia, Cambodia, Darfur, and Rwanda. Perpetrators continue to commit atrocities in places like Burma, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, and Syria. It is important not only to confront the current events that affect our world today, but also to acknowledge and reflect upon what happened in the past. Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month seeks to remember and commemorate those lives lost and in doing so build a better, more peaceful future. This April, you can sponsor or support advocacy and remembrance events all across the globe.



Section 2: Conflict Overviews

2.1 Burma

Following decades of military rule, Burma has been begun inching towards democratic reform. The international community has been quick to embrace the former regime but ignore the unfolding genocide in western Rakhine state.

Current Status

Since June 2012, there has been a disturbing increase in state-sponsored and state-sanctioned violence against the Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State. The Rohingya face an overwhelming coalition of Rakhine Buddhist nationalists, state armed forces, and radical Buddhist monks. Human rights organizations have warned this recent violence against the Rohingya has reached the status of “ethnic cleansing.”

Alarming, humanitarian aid group Doctors Without Borders (MSF) was expelled from Rakhine State in March 2014 for providing medical treatment to needy Rohingya. The desperate Rohingya could scarcely afford such a blow, more than 700,000 are without access to healthcare. The Rohingya are denied citizenship, are forced to live in ghettos or refugee camps, and a two-child limit policy is imposed on Rohingya in northern Rakhine state. On the national level, a campaign of radical, anti-Muslim Buddhist nationalism, the 969 movement, has gained popularity throughout the country fueling anti-Muslim violence and discriminatory policies and economic boycotts.

A quasi-civilian government is now in place, but its president is a former army general and military insiders dominate the government. Many western countries, including the U.S., rushed to normalize ties with the “new” government, but the reality is the military that remains in control of the government and serious reform is still needed. New political prisoners continue to be locked up, criticizing the government is a criminal offense and an obscure clause in the Constitution still prevents Aung San Suu Kyi from becoming President.

Important Statistics

Refugees: 415,300

Internally Displaced Persons: 430,400

Stateless people: 800,000 – 1,300,000

Child soldiers: 5,000+

(Burma continued)

Important People and Terms



Ashin Wirathu: The self-declared “Burmese Bin Laden,” Wirathu is the Buddhist monk responsible for propagating the hate-driven anti-Muslim 969 movement.

Tatmadaw: The Myanmar military; has committed numerous human rights violations including forced labor, torture, sexual assault, and the use of child soldiers and is not subject to civilian control.

Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP): The state-sponsored party in Burma. It holds a majority of seats in Parliament.

Aung San Suu Kyi: Currently a Parliamentarian in Burma. Nobel Peace Prize recipient and leader of the political party that won the 1990 elections, spent more than 16 years under house arrest. Released in November 2010 and has recently declared her intention to run for president in 2015.

Thein Sein: Current president: former army general and military junta leader.

Timeline

1962: Military coup; single-party, military-led state established

1989: Martial law declared, Burma renamed Myanmar

August 2007: Saffron Revolution begins, high fuel prices spark protests by thousands of Buddhist monks

May 2008: Constitutional referendum held, widely condemned as fraudulent

April 2011: Quasi-civilian government established

2012–present: Acts of ethnic cleansing committed against the Rohingya

March 2014: Doctors Without Borders (MSF) expelled from Rakhine State for providing medical care to Rohingya

2.2 Central African Republic

The Central African Republic, or CAR, is a landlocked, underdeveloped state in an escalating crisis since December 2013. In the heart of Africa and neighbored by states constantly experiencing instability, CAR has a long history of coups and authoritarian leaders. Past and current crises are the result of an internal conflict over state power and access to natural resources, as well as regional dynamics of neighboring and international actors pursuing political and economic objectives in CAR [CAR is rich in natural resources, including diamonds, timber, uranium, and potential oil and gas deposits]. Recent violence is exacerbated by national and regional actors utilizing religious tensions between the Christian majority and Muslim minority to mobilize supporters and fuel the conflict with the intent of securing their personal interests. The most recent crisis has spun out of control and deteriorated to a series of retaliatory attacks by both sides. As of March 2014, the conflict has resulted in the death of at least 1,000 people, roughly 601,000 internally displaced persons, and an addition of 54,000 refugees to the over 200,000 already living in neighboring countries.

Since gaining independence from France in 1960, CAR has dealt with six authoritarian leaders and the perpetual presence of foreign troops. Following a series of coups, civil wars, and foreign interventions, CAR held its first multiparty elections in 1993. However, instability grew and, with the backing of Chad, army General Francois Bozizé rebelled and took power in 2003. While Bozizé brought relative stability for several years and was reelected in 2011, many Central Africans and his Chadian supporters began to view him as an autocratic and patriarchal leader. Numerous rebel groups were already active in the north and northeast, including groups formerly loyal to Bozizé, but in 2012, these groups formed into a loose alliance known as Seleka, predominantly made up of civilians from northern CAR. Seleka exploited frustrations with the concentration of power amongst Bozizé's family, underdevelopment of the northern region, and the pervasive corruption in governance to gain supporters. In March 2013, the Seleka, which then included fighters from neighboring states, overthrew Bozizé, and Michel Djotodia became the first Muslim leader of the mainly Christian country. Over the following months, the Seleka led brutal attacks against civilians. Under a U.N. resolution, France deployed an initial troop force of 1,200 to CAR in December 2013 to stabilize the capital, Bangui. When President Djotodia resigned in early January due to pressures from regional leaders and a transitional government took over, violence intensified beyond the capital and thousands of Muslims have fled the country out of fear of retaliation attacks by self-defense Christian militias known as Anti-Balaka. While the conflict has taken a religious tone, religion is an outcome, not a cause of conflict. Economic and political incentives are driving internal and external actors of the conflict.

(CAR continued)

Current Status

The Anti-Balaka and Seleka continue to commit atrocities throughout CAR. In December 2013, fighting escalated in Bangui between the two armed groups with dire humanitarian consequences. Civilians are still threatened by armed militias nationwide and retaliatory attacks result in multiple deaths in Bangui every day. Thousands of Muslims are fleeing the country to Cameroon and Chad due to extensive retaliation attacks by anti-Balaka, who are seeking revenge for the acts of Seleka over the last year. Humanitarian actors are trying to aid the 2.5 million people in need of assistance, but are greatly limited by instability, underfunding, and the inability to restock areas ahead of the coming rainy season. The existing French and A.U.-led peacekeeping operation has 8,000 troops, but is struggling to maintain security and disarm militia groups. The U.N. Secretary General has recommended a reinforcement of these forces until the potential deployment of a full-fledged U.N. peacekeeping operation (UNPKO). However, the U.N. Security Council is still debating the need for a UNPKO in light of the A.U.'s potential ability to stabilize the situation.

The current crisis shows no signs of diminishing and requires a concerted regional and international effort to end the conflict. Neighboring countries are part of the problem and must be part of the solution. There must be support for a regional peace process that includes major regional actors like Chad, Sudan, and Cameroon. There will be no stable solution to the crisis in CAR unless these border regions are secured and mechanisms are established to address the involvement of such regional actors in CAR. In addition, there must be support for a national reconciliation process and for paying civil servants of functioning state institutions. Lastly, CAR has massive development needs, including the reform of the diamond and natural resources sector, which could help bring revenue to the poor and underdeveloped state.



2.3 Democratic Republic of Congo

The armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo began in the early 1990s and is notorious for fueling gross violations of human rights, particularly sexual violence. It is the world's deadliest conflict since World War II, with millions dead and displaced. Despite its abundant natural resources, Congo is one of the lowest-ranked countries by the U.N. on the Human Development Index. It is also home to the largest U.N. peacekeeping mission in the world, MONUSCO. Armed groups and members of the Congolese army have been known to use rape and other forms of sexual violence as weapons of war, instilling widespread fear among civilians and fracturing communities. This crisis continues as a central component of armed attacks in eastern Congo.

The illicit exploitation of minerals and other natural resources is a major driver of conflict in Congo. Armed groups have generated hundreds of millions of dollars by smuggling minerals – in particular, gold, tin, tantalum, and tungsten that are found in electronics, jewelry, and other products – controlling mines and trading routes through the use of force and brutality. Since the U.S. government, leading electronics companies, and student groups have begun working to ensure that these minerals do not support Congo's conflict, armed groups are earning significantly less revenue from the sale of 3 of the 4 conflict minerals. However, an illicit gold trade continues to benefit armed groups because gold is easily smuggled and is very valuable in small quantities. The conflict gold trade is controlled by a handful of smugglers in the region who conduct business with armed groups who operate with impunity. Regional governments have also incited armed groups to take advantage of Congo's natural resources. U.N. and U.S. intelligence confirmed that Rwanda and to a lesser extent Uganda supported the M23 rebel group in 2012 and 2013, which resulted in the temporary overthrow of Goma, the capital city of the eastern province of North Kivu.

Current Status

There is now renewed hope for peace in eastern Congo. The U.N. and 11 African governments signed the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework for Congo and the Region in February 2013. High-level Special Envoys from the U.S. and the U.N., former U.S. Senator Russ Feingold and former Irish President Mary Robinson, were appointed in 2013. The U.S. and European governments also pressured Rwanda to suspend its support to the M23 rebel group in 2013. The M23 was defeated by the Congolese army in November 2013 but may be regrouping in smaller numbers now. The most significant rebel group today is a militia led by suspected Rwandan génocidaires called the FDLR, while over 40 other, smaller rebel groups also still exist.

(DRC continued)

A growing consumer movement for conflict-free products along with U.S. legislation has made it more difficult for armed groups to generate revenue, and played a role in Intel's recent release of the first-ever conflict-free product (a microprocessor) containing minerals sourced from Congo. Other companies leading efforts to break the links between electronics products and violence in Congo are Motorola Solutions, Apple, Philips, and HP. They are starting to source clean minerals from Congo, but more responsible investment in Congo from tech companies is needed. Jewelers, however, have lagged behind on conflict gold, so it is important to call on them to boost their efforts to combat the conflict gold trade.

Forward momentum in the development of Congo's renewed peace process is essential, especially following the signing of peace declarations between M23 and Congolese government in December 2013. Congo and U.N. peacekeepers have started operations against other armed groups. Efforts are underway to ensure perpetrators of the worst violations of human rights from all sides of the conflict are held to account through justice mechanisms. Finally, the International Criminal Court has recently taken on the cases of Germain Katanga and Bosco Ntaganda, both accused of sexual violence charges. While Bosco's case remains open, the ICC acquitted Katanga of all sexual violence charges, indicating an urgent need for increased accountability and improved investigative strategies both internationally and locally.



2.4 Sudan and South Sudan

Sudan has been at war for longer than it has been at peace. Inequitable wealth sharing of revenues from resources, the struggle for southern self-determination, and competing views on the role of religion in the state have all contributed to conflict. However, the main reason for war in Sudan has been the lack of democratic governance in Khartoum and the marginalization of communities on the periphery of the country. Sudan's first civil war, between the government and southern rebels demanding greater autonomy, lasted from 1955 to 1973. After southerners were denied self-governance, a second civil war erupted, leaving two and a half million people dead and four million displaced, and ending with the signing of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, or CPA. Unfortunately, the CPA only addressed issues related to the south of Sudan, leaving unresolved issues festering across the rest of the country. Government-sponsored militias repressed a growing Darfuri rebellion and indiscriminately targeted civilian populations leading to what most people agree was the world's first genocide since Rwanda. Hotly disputed elections in South Kordofan and Blue Nile sparked a popular uprising in those states. Therefore, when South Sudanese secured their independence in 2011, conflict was still raging in South Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Darfur.

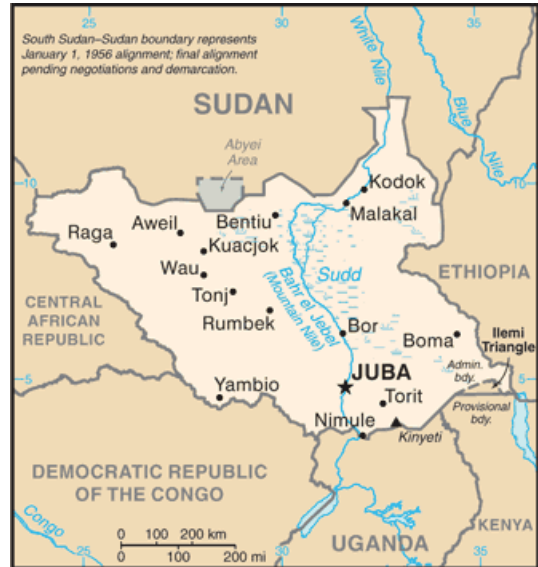
Current Status

SUDAN: The Sudanese military and government-backed militias continue to commit atrocities, including aerial bombardments, exacting a punishing toll on hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile. In 2013, escalating violence plunged Sudan's Darfur region into the worst humanitarian crisis in years. At least 400,000 Darfuris were forced to flee their homes due to violence in 2013, more than the previous two years combined. 2014 has started no differently, with an estimated 200,000 newly displaced in the first 3 months of the year in Darfur. Now shifting political alliances between the government's historic allies - the Janjaweed - are raising new concerns about worsening violence. In South Kordofan and Blue Nile, where rebel forces are engaged in an uprising against the government, over one million people have been either internally displaced or forced to flee Sudan and seek refuge in neighboring countries. Those who remain in their homes are cut off from desperately needed food and medical care because of the Sudanese government's refusal to permit international aid organizations access to conflict-affected areas.



(Sudan and South Sudan continued)

SOUTH SUDAN: What was largely a political crisis within the ruling party in South Sudan mutated into a violent conflict on December 15, 2013 when leaders utilized existing ethnic fissures to mobilize supporters throughout South Sudan. Fighting spread beyond the capital and violence between the two armed groups has resulted in the deaths of thousands and displacement of upwards of one million people. On January 23, 2014 a Cessation of Hostilities agreement was signed between the Government of South Sudan and opposition forces and seven out of the 11 political detainees were released on January 29. As of early February 2014, four detainees remain in government custody and reports of clashes persist. These are just the first steps on the long road to sustainable peace in South Sudan. An inclusive national dialogue process, security sector reform and real accountability measures are needed to sustainably address the root causes of South Sudan's violence.



In a troubled region, a crisis response to the urgent security and political needs of South Sudan should not eclipse those of Sudan, which needs a continued focus. Increased air strikes in Sudan, worsening humanitarian conditions in camps, and conflicts forcing many South Sudanese to flee into Sudan and Sudanese to flee into South Sudan demand renewed engagement on multiple fronts. There must be a more robust effort aimed at building comprehensive peace processes in both countries that include all stakeholders and consider the impact each country has on the other's stability. In Sudan, stove-piped peace strategies pursued by local or international leaders that address the interests of some groups but not others, will not bring peace. In South Sudan, if core drivers of violence are not addressed, the wars will continue. Continued violence raises the specter of further atrocity crimes, and dangerous destabilizing consequences for the region.

2.5 Syria

President Bashar al-Assad has ruled Syria since he took power after his father's death in 2000. However, after years of poverty, repression, and corruption, combined with the catalyst of the Arab Uprisings, protesters began demonstrating against the Assad regime in early 2011. The Assad regime responded with a brutal crackdown, and a countrywide uprising and conflict unfolded.

The Syrian army has routinely used heavy artillery, tanks, rockets, and mortars to assault protesters and civilians since peaceful protests early in the uprising. Numerous and brutal atrocities, including the infamous Ghouta chemical weapons massacre in August 2013, have been committed by regime forces during the revolution. Certain factions of the opposition have also committed atrocities. The conflict has often pitted Alawites and Christians against Sunni Muslims, but many other factors have determined divides in Syria. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights has stated that over 146,000 people have died since the uprising began, including about 73,000 civilians and 7,000 children. Sexual and gender based violence, mass arrests, and torture have also become widespread tactics of war.

While the government opposition movement remains fractured and deeply divided, the largest player is the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, commonly known as the Syrian National Coalition and composed of numerous opposition groups, including the Syrian National Council. The Free Syrian Army (FSA) is the main armed opposition group, but groups linked to al-Qaeda are increasingly common. These groups include the al-Nusra front, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and Ahrar ash-Sham.



Current Status

Nearly 2.6 million Syrians have fled the country since the crisis began, 6.5 million Syrians are internally displaced, and 9.3 million Syrians require humanitarian assistance. The refugee crisis is one of the regionalizing components of the conflict, as refugees have spilled in waves into Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and elsewhere in the region.

U.N. Security Council negotiations have remained stalled, with the looming threat of Russian and Chinese vetoes. Kofi Annan served as the U.N. and Arab League's Syria Envoy and attempted to negotiate a peace plan for six months, but resigned from the position in August 2012 after violence escalated; Lakhdar Brahimi, a seasoned Algerian diplomat, has succeeded him, but with little success. The U.N. has appealed for \$4.26 billion to address the crisis in 2014, but has so far only received 14% of the amount so far. Additionally, most humanitarian aid delivered by the U.N. inside Syria can only be delivered in Assad regime-controlled areas.

Section 3: Take Action

3.1 Host a Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month event

Hosting an event during Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month is a great way to engage and educate your community in the larger movement to prevent and end mass atrocities and genocide.

Decide on your Objectives, Audience, and Activity

Objectives: Think about what you want the event to accomplish. What do you want people to walk away with? What do you want them to understand? Do you want to use the event to build your local community of advocates or fundraise? Answering these questions will help you focus your event.

Audience: Is this event open to the public or do you want to educate your peers? This will help you determine the tone, location, time, outreach, and materials you wish to provide.

Activity: Once you've decided on your objectives you can determine what to do at your event. Do you want to have a speaker, show a film, or simply plug into an existing event? Some elements you might want to think about including in your event are live music that incorporates playing songs related to or supporting the campaign to educate people about mass atrocities, showing a slideshow with pictures or video clips, showing a film and having a follow-up discussion, presenting a powerpoint presentation, doing a community art project, or having a fundraising element like a raffle or silent auction. Some communities already have events that you can plug into. Partnering with existing groups or events can have advantages such as the ability to reach a wider audience and further promotion.

Event Materials and Resources

- [The Carl Wilkens Fellowship](#) has a list of films and books about various genocides and mass atrocities.
- [The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) has tips on how to organize a commemoration event.
- [United to End Genocide](#) has a range of resources and tips for starting campaigns, holding events, and building networks.
- Check out pages 22-23 for tips on attracting media coverage at your event.

Choose a Date and Time

Pick a day for your event that fits with your targeted community. Choose a date that is far enough in advance so you can plan the event, prepare the items you want to share, and advertise your event in advance. Remember it is important to pick a day that fits with your target audience; students may be more likely to attend a weekday event, while community members may be more attracted to a weekend event. Common days of action during April are listed below, but remembrance and commemoration days do not have to fall on these exact dates:



April 5: Anniversary of the Siege of Sarajevo [Bosnia]

April 7: Rwandan Genocide Anniversary

April 17: Cambodian Remembrance Day

April 24: Armenian Remembrance Day

April 27-28: Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yom HaShoah

Location

Picking a location is an important decision. You want to be as central as possible for your target audience. You can host it at your school, a private residence, like your house, or at a local business or community center who will allow you to use the space for free or low-cost. Make sure the location is accessible by bike, public transportation, and car.

Sponsorships and Support for your Event

While you are planning your event, begin to think about possible organizations and businesses who might want to co-sponsor by providing a location, food, drinks, raffle or silent auction items, or help with outreach. Partnering with other local organizations and businesses can increase participation at your event and offset any costs that you might foresee.

Getting People to your Event

Whether your event is open to the public or for your peers, make sure you give people enough time to put it in their calendars. Do not depend on invitation programs, like evite alone. Personally send out email, print, or social media invitations. Printed flyers that can be put on the refrigerator or passed on to others is a helpful tool for outreach. Post the

(Host a Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month event continued)

event on local listservs and online and physical community events calendars and contact community media stations and newspapers in advance. A few days beforehand, be sure to send reminders to your friends and listservs, especially if you have an RSVP list.

Day of Your Event

Be sure to arrive early at your location and set up and test any equipment that you need; even if your equipment worked at home, re-check it! It's important to start and end on time. Either you or another team member should be at the door greeting everyone as they come in. Be sure to collect all the attendee's contact information and point them to any handouts you have. When they enter, ask them to use #ActToEndGenocide in any social media sharing they do at your event. When the event program concludes, stick around to answer any questions.

Handouts: Have at least one handout about your event (i.e. a film overview or speaker bios). Include information about your group, your contact information, and any upcoming events or meetings attendees can get involved in.

Action: Have at least one action attendees can do at the event that is relevant to your theme or program (i.e. sign a petition or hand-write a letter to their member of Congress). Contact one of our organizations for current actions to help end and prevent mass atrocities; contact information can be found on page 24 of this toolkit.

Donations: Decide ahead of time if you are going to take donations in the name of an organization. If you are, make sure you provide a short informational piece somewhere in your materials or presentation about this organization and what the funds support. For information and ideas on projects you can support, contact one of the organizations listed on page 24 of this toolkit.

Follow-Up

Follow-up with attendees within one week of the event with a short email, text, or phone call. For volunteers and event sponsors, write a personal thank you note for their support. The next time you plan an event, be sure to include them in the planning process.

3.2 How to plan a community service event

Identify Your Project:

Think about the needs of your community. Talk to your friends, class, or club about projects they'd be excited about doing. Is there a community garden that needs weeding before spring? Is there a local food bank that could use a few extra hands? Maybe you want to organize your school choir to sing at a retirement home. Get thinking and get creative!

Contact The Right People and Organizations:

Now that you've decided on a project, you need to get the go ahead! Contact the organization you want to work with. Calling the front desk or finding the "Contact Us" information on their website is a good place to start. Be persistent! If you don't hear back from them in a few days, follow up. Leave your name, purpose, phone number, group or school name, and a good time to reach you. One great way to connect with survivors of conflict and displacement in your community is to volunteer with a [local refugee resettlement organization](#).

Arrange a Meeting:

The leader(s) of your group should meet with your host organization to share ideas and get on the same page about your service event. This is a chance for you to learn more about the history and mission of the organization and to ensure that your project will contribute to the organization's needs.

Questions to ask:



- Is special training needed for volunteers?
- What is the minimum and maximum number of volunteers who can participate?
- Is the space accessible?
- Are there supplies your group will need to bring?
- Will snacks or meals be provided or should volunteers bring their own?
- Are there any forms or liability waivers volunteers or their guardians will need to fill out?
- What clothing should volunteers wear?

Get Noticed!

Local media can amplify your message and get your cause out to a larger audience. This is when you can make a direct connection between your local community service and the global message. Make sure the organization you're working with is OK with you contacting the media. *Check out pages 22–23 for media tips.*

Before the Event

- Make sure all volunteers feel comfortable with the work they'll be doing.
- Make sure any waivers have been signed and training has been completed, if applicable.
- Ensure everyone is able to get to and from the venue through carpooling, public transit, rental van, etc., that they know where the venue is, and that they know what time they need to arrive.
- Send reminders to your volunteers the week and day before your event through email, voicemail, text-- whatever it takes to make sure no one forgets!
- Have emergency contact information for everyone.
- Get commitment from your volunteers. Get a clear "yes" or "no" as to whether they will participate.
- Don't forget to confirm all details with host organization the week before the event!

The Day Of:

- Make sure your group leader(s) are a few minutes early to meet with the host organization and make sure everything is ready to go.
- Bring a camera! You'll want to have photos to share on social media and with local media, if applicable. Make sure to okay this with your host organization first!
- Build in time for reflection. How did everything go? How are your volunteers feeling? A group circle can be a really nice way to debrief after the event.

After the Project:

- Thank your host organization, your volunteers, and anyone else who helped the event happen. Do this in person and by email, but also consider mailing thank-you notes.
- Follow up with local media and tell them how the event went!
- Let us know how your event went! We love featuring events on our social media and website. Contact information can be found on page 24 of this toolkit.

3.3 How to meet with your Member of Congress in-district

Meeting with your members of Congress and elected officials is one of the most important and rewarding ways to take action. It is their job to listen to you and act on things you care about as a resident of their district. Letting them know you care about these issues has a big impact and could influence their policy decisions. See the next two pages for steps on how to setup and hold a meeting with your members of Congress and elected officials. Contact us with any questions or concerns. We are here to support you every step of the way.

Step 1: Find your member of Congress and locate the office nearest you.

Visit www.house.gov and www.senate.gov to find out who your Representative and Senators are.

Step 2: Request a meeting.

Typically, meeting requests must be submitted in writing. Your member's website might provide instructions on how to submit this request. You can also call their office to ask. Meeting requests typically include the following information:



- Preferred time, date, and location of the meeting
- Your name and contact information
- Name(s) and addresses, if possible, of meeting attendees
- The issue you would like to discuss

Step 3: Prepare for and have the meeting.

Create a meeting outline. You can find a sample outline below. Additionally, create a simple one-pager to leave behind, such as a fact sheet of the current situation, timeline of the conflict, or outline of the current legislation on the country or countries that you choose; be sure to always include your contact information on the document. Contact us for details and key facts or if you want suggestions on talking points or the latest information on the activities of your member of Congress. Review our tips for meeting with a congressional office.

(How to Meet With Your Member of Congress continued)

Use this meeting outline as a guide:

1. Introductions: Introduce yourself and explain why you care about these issues.
2. Presentation of the Issues: Make the case through a few key facts about why your member of Congress should act.
3. Make an ask: Give him or her one or two specific recommendations on how to act. You can find the latest action on the Enough Project or STAND websites, or email us to ask what they are able to do. Be sure the ask is something your particular member of Congress has not yet done. If you are requesting support for a specific piece of legislation, it is helpful to educate yourself on the bill. You can find all legislation online and can also email us to find out more.
4. Thank your member of Congress for their time.

Step 4: Follow up with your member of Congress.

- Send a thank-you note to the member of Congress or staff member expressing your appreciation for their time meeting with you and their commitment to these issues.
- Follow up with the appropriate congressional staffer. A follow-up email to the staff member a few weeks later ensures that your efforts are not overlooked or forgotten and help you develop a relationship with that person for future requests.
- Keep us in the loop! We want to know how your meeting went. Your information will make our advocacy as effective as possible next time we meet with your members of Congress's office here in Washington, D.C. Contact information can be found on page 24 of this toolkit.

3.4 Other action opportunities

[Pass a local resolution in your city or town](#) to officially designate April as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month within your community and express its official support for genocide prevention as a national priority. Passing a local resolution is an important step in organizing your community behind the idea that “Never again” should be a reality, not just a slogan.

[Pass a conflict-free campus resolution](#): There are multiple routes that students can take in getting their high school, college, or university to take a stand on conflict minerals. Electronics companies have identified schools and students as their most coveted demographic. A statement or policy change from an administration sends a powerful message to companies, letting them know that they must take the necessary steps to rid their supply chains of conflict minerals and make positive investments in Congo. Learn about the different types of campus resolutions and how you can sign up and get connected to an international network of students who are working to make their schools conflict-free.

[Pass a conflict-free city resolution](#): A city resolution will express your city’s preference, as a large consumer and holder of major purchasing contracts from companies, for conflict-free products. It will encourage the electronics industry and others to do more to source minerals from eastern Congo that benefit communities rather than fuel the cycle of rape and war.

Raise awareness of the ongoing conflicts in Sudan by [viewing and sharing these infographics](#) that illustrate the devastating humanitarian impact of the continued violence and displacement in Sudan’s Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile regions.

Tweet throughout the month using [#ActToEndGenocide](#)

(Other Action Opportunities continued)

Direct actions are when a group of people take an action which is intended to reveal an existing problem or demonstrate a possible solution to a social issue. These are useful tactics to get attention, raise awareness, and reframe the issue of mass atrocities. Use our event planning section on pages 12-16 for tips and be sure to acquire any permits necessary for hosting events in public spaces. The following direct actions use the Syrian conflict as an example, but you could easily replicate them for advocacy around other issue areas:



- *Artistic Vigil* – Turn a vigil into more than just a sign of solidarity, but also a visual concept piece. You could use candles to spell out #Syria or to highlight to staggering statistics.
- *Banner Drop* – Drop a banner from a noticeable building or place. You could paint your message about peace in Syria on a banner (or bedsheet if you're looking for something cheaper) and hang it from a campus building/dorm (make sure to get permission if necessary!).
- *Guerilla Projections* – Find a projector and project your message about #Syria onto a visible building.
- *Chalk-Ins* – Chalk up main streets and sidewalks, and cover them with facts about Syria or even a map.
- *Flash mob* – Get your friends together and hold a flash mob in your school to show solidarity.
- *Human Banner* – Get some friends together and spell out #Syria with your bodies. Be sure to have someone take a photo.
- *Mock Refugee Camp* – The Syrian conflict has resulted in a mass refugee problem. Use tents to make a large display, calling attention to the refugee crisis and showing your solidarity.

April 7, 2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide in which as many as 800,000 Rwandans were killed in just 100 days. This is an important moment to remember the lives that were lost, show solidarity with survivors, and unite to proclaim our commitment to a world without genocide.

Many organizations, including STAND, are organizing around this moment. Add your voice to STAND's One Million Voices to share your hopes for the future with peacemakers from around the world. To join, all you have to do is post a picture of solidarity and genocide prevention on Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag #Rwanda20. Your message may be used as part of April 2014 global commemoration activities. These photos from around the world will live on as messages of remembrance and hope for a more just world. To learn about STAND's activities, visit

www.rwanda20th.com.

3.5 Attend Events

Genocide and mass atrocity commemoration, awareness raising, and prevention events are held throughout the United States during the month of April. Attending such events is a great opportunity to meet other individuals and groups also dedicating their time and efforts to this cause, learn and share information, and meet with survivors. Below is a list of just some of the many events that may be going happening in your community this April.

Many Genocide, Holocaust, and Human Rights museums and memorials will host events throughout the month. [Use this list to find museums and memorials in your area](#) and check out the “Events” section of their website or contact them directly to inquire about any upcoming events.

- The [Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education](#) will provide curriculum packets to schools wishing to develop the month of April to Genocide Education and Prevention. Age-appropriate materials will include books, films, and lessons.
- i-ACT and the Carl Wilkens Fellowship maintain [a calendar with local events throughout the year](#).
- Jewish World Watch is hosting 6 [Walks to End Genocide](#) this year- 5 in California and one in New York. The walks educate the greater community about the conflicts in the DRC and Sudan and show our government that there is a large constituency that is passionate about this cause.
- The Amnesty International Irvine Chapter will host [Remembering the Past toward Healing our Future](#), a series of six film screenings and discussions and a closing reception, throughout April.
- Scottsdale Community College is hosting a [Genocide Awareness Week](#) from April 7-12, 2014. It will include seminars, educator workshops, photography and art exhibits, and more.
- Emmanuel Habimana is a filmmaker, activist, and survivor of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. He is touring the United States and speaking at schools from March to May. [Learn more and invite him to speak in your community](#).
- The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum is designating [Holocaust Remembrance Week](#) this year as April 27- May 4, 2014 and has a map of U.S. Commemoration events.

Don't see an event or organization near you? Contact us and we can point you in the right direction.

Section 4: Media

Why is media important?

Media can help tell elected officials what their constituents want from them. Legislators often have staffers or interns who monitor op-eds or letters for mention of that legislator. They view articles and opinion pieces in local papers as strong indicators of constituent opinion in their districts. Additionally, if an article is written about a rally, legislators will see the enormous amount of people who care about an issue.

Media also gets the word out to potential activists, broadening the activist community. Being featured in an article, writing your own letters and op-eds, or utilizing social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can pull more people into the anti-genocide movement. Always provide ways for people to get involved in these issues -- the more constituents who get involved, the more interested an elected official will be to do the same. You can't stop a genocide without knowing about it; and media informs readers of the ongoing atrocities.

Traditional versus Social Media

There are many different types of media you can use to maximize your impact. Traditional and long-form media such as newspaper op-eds, online articles, or blog posts are generally good for educating your community on the background of the issues you are working on and letting them know what your group is working towards. Social media is used for more concise messaging, and can be helpful when trying to get the word out about an event or action, or used to directly contact local politicians or other key actors.

How to use media to promote your work:

Letter to the Editor (LTE): Typically 150-words long, this letter is addressed to the editor of the news source and usually has a 'ask', targeting individuals or groups of individuals. One example is that you might write a letter explaining why your city council should [pass a resolution to recognize April as Genocide Prevention Month](#). Browse the newspaper's website for information on how to send this letter to the editor; information is usually found under the "Contact Us" section.

- *Potential Outlets:* School newspapers, local town/city newspapers, and local weekly magazines.

Op-ed: Like a letter to the editor, but longer – check the news source you're addressing to see word limits, as they vary. This piece allows you to go more in-depth about why it's important to prevent genocide, what your group is doing about it, and why you think others should care about this issue.

(Media continued)

- *Potential Outlets:* In addition to the LTE outlets, try online blogging websites like PolicyMic, or create your own blog to get your pieces published, since these are natural platforms to present opinion pieces. Enroll in STAND's "[Guide to Navigating the Blogosphere](#)" program for extra assistance.

Media Advisory: A media advisory can be used to notify and invite the press to your upcoming event. It is highly specific and covers only the "who, what, where, and when" of the event. Limit the length of a media advisory to one page and send it out to local newspapers and magazines several days before your event.

Press Release: A press release is used to notify the media and general public about your group's activities or position on an issue. Include background information on the event or issues and a quote or two from the group, when applicable. It should include a strong opening sentence and incorporate a local angle, if possible. Look on the newspaper's website for reporters who cover education, community activism, or local government issues, and email those specific reporters, as they are more likely to follow up and write a news piece on your story. At the end of the press release, always add contact information for your organization. [Click here for a sample press release on Genocide Prevention Month.](#)

- *Potential Outlets:* In addition to the LTE outlets, pass these along to school and local radio and TV stations since they may be interested in interviewing you.

Social Media: The number of social media platforms available is continually growing, and you should use any and all sources you can think of to get your story out there. You can create an event on Facebook, share an article on Twitter and tag your local city council members so that they see it, or post a photo of your event to Instagram. Social media is also useful because it connects you to other anti-genocide activists around the world. Here are some useful hashtags and handles you can use to get plugged in:

#ActToEndGenocide
#Burma
#CAR
#CongoPeace
#Rwanda20
#Syria
#Sudan
#SouthSudan

@CFCIstudents
@EnoughProject
@iACT
@GenPrev
@JWorldWatch
@RaiseHope4Congo
@STANDnow

Section 5: Contact Us

Conflict-Free Campus Initiative: Annie Callaway, Enough Project/Raise Hope for Congo Campaign Campus Coordinator, acallaway@enoughproject.org

Enough Project: Rachel Finn, Advocacy Manager, at rfinn@enoughproject.org

i-ACT: Katie-Jay Scott Stauring, Director of Operations and Community Involvement, ktj@iactivism.org

Jewish World Watch: Eden Banarie, Youth Engagement Coordinator, eden@jww.org

STAND: Hannah Finnie, Student Director, director@standnow.org

For communications and media advice, email STAND's Communications Coordinator, Sonia Sen, at media@standnow.org or visit www.standnow.org/act/activism/get-media

Special thanks to partner organizations for the 2014 Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month Toolkit:

[Americans for Informed Democracy](#)

[Investors Against Genocide](#)

[Ask Big Questions](#)

[Enough Project](#)

[The Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation](#)

[Jewish World Watch](#)

[Carl Wilkens Fellowship](#)

[STAND](#)

[Conflict-Free Campus Initiative](#)

[United To End Genocide](#)

[Darfur Dream Team Sister Schools Program](#)

[U.S. Campaign for Burma](#)

[Hillel International](#)

[Voices for Sudan](#)

[i-ACT](#)

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