

Declaration of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention

Fourth Focal Points Meeting
May 29, 2015
Santiago, Chile



The Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention was created in 2012 as an initiative led by the governments of Argentina and Brazil and is currently made up of representatives from state institutions of its 18 member states: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. It is a collaborative effort made by Latin American states that aims to build the regional and national foundations necessary for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. Additionally, it aims to empower Latin American states to become leaders in prevention on the international scene.

The Network is the first initiative of its kind, focusing on the development of public policy dealing with human rights and discrimination issues with a specific concentration on atrocity prevention. This places Latin America, once again, at the forefront of standardized joint implementation of initiatives that focus on universal values and rights; fostering the creation of a standard regional policy on prevention.

The launch of the network occurred at a meeting in March of 2012, at which point the objectives of the initiative were established: (1) Development and implementation of a curriculum on mass atrocity prevention to be implemented into the compulsory training programs of participating institutions of each member country, and (2) regional cooperation and the development of national initiatives for genocide prevention.

Convening in Santiago, Chile at the IV Focal Points Meeting of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention, representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela:

INDICATING that proposed objectives were continually achieved and new joint working projects were established over the Network's first three years of operation; and that the Network is based on the principles contained within the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as well as other pertinent international tools that identify the crime of genocide.

RECALLING that the curriculum on genocide and mass atrocity prevention in Latin America is currently being implemented through bi-annual seminars carried out at Auschwitz, Poland, as well as other previously established locations in Latin America where mass atrocities have taken place; and that each Focal Point works on the identification of areas in his or her country where initiatives on genocide and mass atrocity prevention can be implemented.

CONSIDERING the Network's actions, including training programs on prevention and efforts to achieve inter-institutional coordination, with the purpose of installing and securing a focus on prevention within these countries' public policy agenda.

STATING that the Network should be constructed as a complementary tool for the incorporation and dissemination of best practices in the formulation of prevention policy without overlapping with the mission of other human rights bodies or regional and international fora.

ACKNOWLEDGING the Network's constant support from the United Nations – through the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG) – from the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), and from The Stanley Foundation.

RECALLING that the Secretary General of the United Nations, in his report “Fulfilling our Collective Responsibility: International Assistance and the Responsibility to Protect (Pillar II)” – July 11, 2014 (A/68/947-S/2014/449), highlights the Latin American Network as a forum for partnership and mutual assistance (paragraph 25):

“The increasing number of global and regional networks of States dedicated to preventing atrocity crimes opens new avenues for partnership and mutual assistance. The work of the Global Network of Responsibility to Protect Focal Points, Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes and the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention demonstrates how shared objectives and lessons learned from past experience may help States to identify effective protection strategies.”

HIGHLIGHTING the recognition of the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights in a report (Summary of the high-level panel discussion dedicated to the sixty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide - A/HRC/27/24 - 30 June 2014), that captures a contribution by the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, in which he mentions the Latin American Network as an initiative strengthening the capacity to prevent genocide.

AFFIRMING that this initiative aims to achieve a vision and work jointly towards the development of skills and knowledge to, jointly, address the current challenges related to peace and social justice, to strengthen democratic values, bring innovation to government policy decisions in this field, and to promote international cooperation on the prevention of violent conflicts and mass atrocities.

Therefore, the following points related to the recognition and continuous consolidation of the Network were established:

- I. The institutional interest in perpetuating actions aimed at consolidating the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention as a regional tool that contributes to the continued mainstreaming of atrocity prevention in national agendas.
- II. The interest in continuing to support the institutional outreach of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention and the actions taken towards the consolidation of a common curriculum on prevention, that is applicable to officials with expertise in human rights, international humanitarian law, justice, defense, security and any other area related to work on prevention.
- III. The conviction that a document of this nature is necessary to support the efforts of State institutions acting as Focal Points of the Latin American Network for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, within their respective functions.
- IV. The interest in continuing to disseminate the objectives of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention in international and regional forums by supporting the work carried out by the UN Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation as strategic partners in the development of a prevention focus throughout the region.
- V. The interest in supporting the efforts of the Technical Secretariat of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention/AIPR.

This Declaration was adopted at the Fourth Focal Points Meeting of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention, on May 29, 2015 in the city of Santiago, Chile.

The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia accepted the terms of the Declaration during the V Focal Points Meeting of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention which took place in Brasilia on December 3rd and 4th, 2015.