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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity

Sustained implementation of the responsibility to protect at the national, regional and multilateral levels

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/277](#). The report builds on previous reports on the responsibility to protect, analyses the current context of atrocity crimes and sets out options for sustaining the commitment at the national, regional and multilateral levels. The report proposes ways to embed prevention and protection perspectives into public policy during periods of stability, emerging risk, active crisis and post-conflict recovery.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome,¹ following the failure of the international community to prevent genocide in Rwanda (1994) and in Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995), the General Assembly committed to the responsibility to protect, affirming the responsibility of individual States to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including through the prevention of such crimes and their incitement. World leaders also agreed to encourage and help other States, as appropriate, to exercise that responsibility. To that end, they committed to the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. They also expressed their readiness to take timely and decisive collective action through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations, as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations. Furthermore, they agreed that the international community should, as appropriate, support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.

2. The General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council have referred to the responsibility to protect in numerous resolutions.² Since 2018, the Assembly has held annual meetings on the responsibility to protect. The Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect cooperate with Member States to advance the prevention of atrocity crimes³ and the protection of populations throughout the United Nations system,⁴ as well as through subregional⁵ and regional intergovernmental organizations and civil society. In addition, 56 Member States constitute the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect.⁶

3. In 2025, the United Nations marked the twentieth anniversary of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Member States took stock of progress achieved, underscored persistent challenges and reiterated calls to strengthen implementation of the responsibility to protect through sustained policies at the national, regional and multilateral levels.

4. Two decades of efforts to operationalize the responsibility to protect point to some recurrent lessons, including the following:

(a) The responsibility to protect begins at home. No society is immune to atrocities. The responsibility to protect, by its definition, thus underscores the

¹ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

² Security Council resolutions 1674 (2006) and 1894 (2009); General Assembly resolutions 63/308 and 75/277; and Human Rights Council resolutions 7/25, 22/22, 28/34, 37/26, 43/29, 44/14, 49/9 and 55/13.

³ The present report uses the term “atrocity crimes” to refer to the four acts specified in paragraph 138 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity are defined in international criminal law; ethnic cleansing, while not established as a distinct crime, includes acts that will regularly amount to one of the crimes, in particular genocide and crimes against humanity. See <https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/definition>. See also A/69/981-S/2015/500.

⁴ See <https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention>.

⁵ See <https://icglr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/protocol-for-the-prevention-of-the-crime-of-genocide-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-and-all-forms-of-discrimination.pdf>.

⁶ See <https://www.globalr2p.org/group-of-friends-of-the-responsibility-to-protect/>.

centrality of State responsibility, with the international community playing a supporting role in assistance and prevention;⁷

(b) The responsibility to protect should be a sustained policy and practice.⁸ The integration of the responsibility to protect at the national, regional and multilateral levels across a continuum from stability to crisis enhances the ability to identify and address risks before they escalate into atrocity crimes;

(c) The responsibility to protect has a distinct and complementary focus. It differs from, and can mutually reinforce, conflict prevention, the protection of human rights and the protection of civilians. The responsibility to protect focuses on societal vulnerabilities and populations through ongoing assessments of atrocity risks, patterns and triggers and the formulation of early warnings and recommendations for prevention and protection;

(d) The responsibility to protect is a cooperative endeavour. Dialogue and cooperation between States, affected communities, civil society and the United Nations can strengthen prevention and protection efforts, strengthen national ownership and support resilience;

(e) The responsibility to protect should be implemented in a consistent and sustained manner at the national, regional and multilateral levels, to avoid double standards.

II. Patterns and modalities in the ongoing commission of atrocity crimes

5. In 2025, there were over 120 armed conflicts⁹ recorded around the globe, some of them lasting over 20 years. From December 2024 to November 2025, they resulted in over 48,000 deaths,¹⁰ with women and children predominantly impacted.¹¹ Since 2024, civilian fatalities in armed conflicts have been rising.¹²

6. By the end of 2025, over 204 million people were living under the full or contested control of non-State armed groups or beyond the reach of State institutions and basic services.¹³ Non-State armed actors may operate in complex networks involving State entities, private corporations and criminal groups, including to secure access to valuable resources such as minerals, oil, timber and land.¹⁴ These dynamics can result in grave human rights abuses, including arbitrary detention, torture, sexual violence, enforced recruitment, forced displacement and environmental destruction.¹⁵

⁷ See <https://www.ipinst.org/images/pdfs/s3.pdf>, p. 20.

⁸ See A/67/929-S/2013/399.

⁹ See S/2025/271.

¹⁰ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/06/un-data-shows-surge-civilian-deaths-conflict-globally-highlights-pervasive>; and A/80/81-E/2025/62.

¹¹ See <https://knowledge.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-10/infographic-un-secretary-generals-annual-report-on-women-and-peace-and-security-2025-en.pdf>; and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-and-mechanisms/human-rights-indicators/sdg-indicators-under-ohchrs-custodianship/human-rights-numbers>.

¹² See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025/goal-16>.

¹³ See <https://www.icrc.org/en/news-release/icrc-204-million-people-live-areas-controlled-or-contested-armed-groups>.

¹⁴ See https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta_sahel/TOCTA_Sahel_Transversal_2024.pdf.

¹⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/un-experts-concerned-about-human-rights-violations-linked-mercenary-related>.

Armed criminal groups regulate access to physical spaces, services and livelihoods for much of the population.¹⁶

7. Contemporary conflicts are increasingly marked by technological transformations, including the use of drones, uncrewed armed vehicles, artificial intelligence and digital warfare. Violations of international humanitarian law and permissive interpretations of legal obligations exact an immense human toll. Inconsistent standards, assertions of exceptional circumstances and lack of compliance further undermine respect for international humanitarian law.¹⁷

8. The use of disinformation, hate speech and incitement to violence as tools of conflict can feed conspiracies, denying fact-based evidence, undermining international norms and justifying the criminalization of critical voices. In armed conflict settings, it fuels tensions, worsens humanitarian crises and endangers civilians, United Nations peacekeepers and humanitarian workers.¹⁸

9. Too often, population displacement becomes protracted, with refugee camps existing for decades and humanitarian aid becoming the principal means of survival.¹⁹ As at the start of 2026, some 239 million people needed urgent humanitarian assistance, while aid workers continue to be targeted and humanitarian funding declines, increasing the need for difficult prioritization decisions among extremely vulnerable populations.²⁰ As at June 2025, over 117 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide.²¹

10. In this context, the responsibility to protect framework highlights risk factors that, if unaddressed, may enable or contribute to the commission of atrocities. Extrajudicial killings and disappearances of human rights defenders, environmental activists, journalists and trade unionists are of serious concern.²² Reports of measures that impede or seek to intimidate United Nations experts,²³ including through sanctions or the criminalization of official acts, as well as actions directed at officials of the International Criminal Court, may also have chilling effects on accountability efforts.

11. The Special Rapporteur on minority issues has reported that challenges faced by persons belonging to minorities may include extermination, exclusion, “invisibilization”, discrimination in access to public spaces and services, marginalization, and self-representation and organization.²⁴ Non-sedentary and mobile minorities also face profound challenges due to fragile legal protections.²⁵

12. The targeting of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities²⁶ and members of other identity groups²⁷ can be indicators of elevated atrocity risk. Discriminatory policies against women continue globally, with acute impacts noted

¹⁶ See S/2026/32; and <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/02/1166997>.

¹⁷ S/2025/271, para. 3.

¹⁸ See <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/information-integrity-and-harmful-information>.

¹⁹ See <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099620212122524250/pdf/IDU-9a2bd969-a761-4d2e-b5fc-e0c28d8f9db9.pdf>.

²⁰ See <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2026-enesfr>.

²¹ See <https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/overview/figures-glance>.

²² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-and-mechanisms/human-rights-indicators/sdg-indicators-under-ohchrs-custodianship/human-rights-numbers>.

²³ See <https://www.unognewsroom.org/story/en/2717/ohchr-reaction-to-us-sanctions-imposed-on-special-rapporteur-albanese>.

²⁴ See A/HRC/61/41.

²⁵ See A/HRC/61/41; and A/79/160.

²⁶ See A/HRC/61/33.

²⁷ See A/80/183.

in Afghanistan, according to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in that country.²⁸

13. Today, there is an inflection point for governance systems at all levels, driven by a perceived disconnect between societal needs, values and aspirations and the ability of these systems to meet them.²⁹ These dynamics may heighten societal polarization and, in some circumstances, increase the risks of atrocity crimes.

III. Sustained responsibility to protect: prevention, protection and non-recurrence

14. There is no single cause or set of causes for atrocity crimes.³⁰ They typically emerge over time, including when a specific group is singled out by potential perpetrators as a fundamental threat or impediment to the realization of specific objectives.³¹ Academic research by genocide scholars, historians and other experts, studies of the experience of affected communities and victim testimonies and legal findings together constitute a body of knowledge about atrocity indicators, patterns and triggers.³² Previous reports on the responsibility to protect since 2009 offer relevant observations, contextual analyses and recommendations.³³

15. The responsibility to protect encompasses some of the gravest crimes of international concern. The responsibility to protect differs from, and is mutually complementary with, the prevention of conflict and of human rights violations and the protection of civilians. The responsibility to protect and the protection of civilians share an emphasis on prevention and the responsibility of national authorities with regard to meeting their obligations towards civilians during armed conflicts. While the protection of civilians is grounded in the obligation of parties to armed conflict to distinguish between combatants and civilians,³⁴ the responsibility to protect focuses on preventing and protecting populations against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including in contexts that may not meet the threshold of armed conflict.³⁵

16. A sustained approach to the responsibility to protect is relevant well before – and not only when – atrocities are imminent or occurring. It encompasses a range of actions from periods of relative stability through growing instability, including during situations of serious risk or where atrocity crimes are alleged to have been committed. Such a sustained effort involves two interrelated components:

(a) A sustained prevention approach entails establishing specific indicators of risks, vulnerabilities and early warning mechanisms to track potential triggers and patterns. It identifies specific needs of vulnerable populations and recommends strategies, policies and measures to strengthen resilience and prevent escalation.

²⁸ See A/HRC/56/51; and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/02/afghanistan-talibans-gender-oppression-and-international-funding-cuts>.

²⁹ See https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2025/04/unen_policy_brief_april_2025.pdf.

³⁰ A/67/929-S/2013/399, para. 15.

³¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2014/03/human-rights-council-discusses-prevention-genocide>.

³² See A/63/677; A/67/929-S/2013/399; and <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/18432/IDL-18432.pdf>.

³³ See <https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/responsibility-protect/key-documents>.

³⁴ See Security Council resolution 2417 (2018).

³⁵ See <https://www.globalr2p.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Relationship-between-R2P-and-POC.pdf>.

Sharing data, analyses and recommendations with regional and multilateral counterparts enable informed and timely decision-making;

(b) A sustained protection approach builds on prevention research, analyses and recommendations. It entails activating existing mechanisms, such as legal frameworks, judicial measures and public institutions, to protect vulnerable groups and to deter or halt potential perpetrators. In contexts where atrocity crimes are occurring or alleged to be occurring, using the responsibility to protect lens can help to ensure that the specific needs of vulnerable groups are reflected in protection strategies. At all times, especially during periods of instability, coordination and the mutual exchange of information with regional and multilateral entities are key.³⁶

17. When States are under stress or institutions are fragile, applying a responsibility to protect lens can help to identify ways to strengthen institutional capacity to address societal vulnerabilities and protect vulnerable groups. It can reinforce ongoing efforts related to conflict prevention, human rights and the protection of minorities and may well provide an opportunity for deeper cooperation and the integration of atrocity prevention capacity across the United Nations system.

18. An atrocity-prone dynamic can take the form of short-, medium- or long-term processes, including systematic policies or recurring actions by the State or non-State actors, that disenfranchise or exclude identity-based groups and that may be used to justify their erasure through methods ranging from coercive repression of identity to physical elimination. These dynamics can occur all over the world and are not confined to situations of armed conflict.

19. An atrocity prevention lens consists of a systematic and focused assessment of societal vulnerabilities and vulnerable groups, the identification of conditions that could exacerbate risks or trigger the commission of atrocity crimes and the formulation of policy recommendations aimed at anticipating and effectively managing dynamics that could potentially lead to atrocities or, when needed, at recovering from their consequences.

20. In relatively stable settings, the adoption of a prevention-oriented policy that incorporates a responsibility to protect lens can support early identification of risks and timely responses. For example, discrimination must be addressed from the onset and in an ongoing manner, at the legal, structural and cultural levels, to prevent exclusion, stigmatization, persecution and even violence. The Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: A tool for prevention³⁷ provides a useful set of indicators for analysing national situations and regional trends and identifying the risks of atrocity crimes. Such analysis should consider political and economic indicators, as well as historical and cultural factors, to develop sustainable and appropriate prevention and protection policies.

21. Experience over the past two decades suggests several lessons for sustaining the development of the responsibility to protect:

(a) **National ownership.** To become sustainable and effective, the responsibility to protect depends on national leadership and nationally owned institutions and policies;

(b) **Sustained effort.** The sustained integration of prevention and protection considerations into public policy, from periods of relative stability through periods of

³⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/training9chapter3en.pdf>.

³⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Genocide-Framework-of-Analysis-English.pdf>.

heightened instability, can enable political leadership to act earlier, well before atrocities may occur;

(c) **Evidence-based approaches.** The implementation of the responsibility to protect must be rooted in evidence-based analytical methods for assessing and understanding specific atrocity vulnerabilities, patterns and triggers;

(d) **Participation and dialogue.** The formulation of early warnings and recommendations for prevention and protection are more likely to be effective when informed by dialogue and cooperation between the State and civil society,³⁸ including affected communities;

(e) **Coherence and consistency.** Applying the same standards at the national, regional and multilateral levels ensures legitimacy, credibility and efficiency.

22. The establishment of early warning systems for atrocity crimes may be compared, in some respects, to public health initiatives. For decades, public health programmes have implemented early warning, prevention and risk reduction measures across national, regional and multilateral levels, leading to concrete results.³⁹ These efforts illustrate that prevention and protection planning can be effective, that cooperation among diverse stakeholders is possible and that collective decisions can be taken based on a shared understanding of emerging risks.

IV. Responsibility to protect at the national, regional and multilateral levels

23. Atrocity prevention can be integrated, as appropriate, into national legislation and government policies and harmonized with regional and international prevention and protection strategies.⁴⁰ A set of recommendations to this effect is included in the concluding section of this report.

24. National strategies for preventing atrocity crimes may include measures to remove legal and institutional sources of discrimination; promote equality and inclusion; protect the rights of minorities and other at-risk groups; implement comprehensive human rights policies; train and monitor public institutions; safeguard the rule of law and judicial independence; strengthen the responsiveness of government institutions to people's needs; support free and independent media; engage in dialogue with civil society; ensure regular, transparent and credible elections; promote tolerance, mutual respect and human rights; counter racism, hate speech and incitement; fight against corruption; develop mechanisms to respond to intercommunal tensions; and address the legacy and consequences of past atrocities, where relevant.⁴¹

25. Regional entities can play a crucial role in addressing atrocity-prone dynamics. The development and implementation of common early warning systems, prevention and protection frameworks and joint training sessions can enable appropriate and timely decisions and strengthen a joint prevention culture.

³⁸ Civil society includes here academia and the private sector.

³⁹ See <https://www.who.int/activities/preparing-and-preventing-epidemics-and-pandemics/measuring-the-effectiveness-and-impact-of-public-health-and-social-measures>; and <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/documents/detect-earlier-to-better-protect.pdf>.

⁴⁰ See A/65/877-S/2011/393.

⁴¹ See https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/2024_pbf_thematic_review_hires_0.pdf; and A/79/552-S/2024/767.

26. Regional and subregional organizations are key partners⁴² of States engaged in implementing the responsibility to protect, including in connection with broader peace and security initiatives. The African Union, the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Organization of American States and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have developed toolkits, frameworks,⁴³ regional capacities and infrastructure to that end. Civil society organizations are also key contributors to building prevention and protection capacity.⁴⁴

27. In paragraph 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, Member States expressed their preparedness to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations, as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. When adopted, sanctions should take into account any potential consequences on humanitarian relief for civilians.⁴⁵

28. Permanent Members of the Security Council have been encouraged to exercise restraint from using the veto in situations involving serious risk or allegations of commission of atrocity crimes.⁴⁶ Where the Security Council is unable to act, the General Assembly may consider the available range of options, including using the resolution 377 (V), entitled “Uniting for peace”,⁴⁷ to support the protection of populations and recommend additional means of atrocity prevention and protection.

29. When States implement the responsibility to protect as a sustained and consistent policy at the national, regional and multilateral levels, they strengthen the credibility of the commitment to protect populations. This can thus enable timely decisions to be taken to deter dangerous dynamics and can lessen concerns over the application of double standards. Moreover, this can contribute to strengthening a shared culture of prevention and protection.

V. Prevention in the framework of the responsibility to protect

30. In relatively stable contexts, the responsibility to protect can be integrated as an additional lens within existing mechanisms related to human rights, good governance and the rule of law, with attention paid to atrocity risk indicators, patterns and triggers. Appointing domestic focal points, in addition to the existing focal points operating at the multilateral level, can support national implementation and ownership. National focal points may be situated within existing entities, such as independent national human rights institutions,⁴⁸ government bodies mandated to implement national prevention strategies,⁴⁹ national committees on the prevention of genocide and other

⁴² A/79/875-S/2025/248, paras. 46–53.

⁴³ Frameworks include early warning systems (see A/79/875-S/2025/248).

⁴⁴ See <https://r2pasiapacific.org/>; www.gaamac.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/RL_AWG-manual-on-best-practices.pdf; www.gaamac.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/RL_AWG-toolkit_FINAL_EN.pdf; and www.globalr2p.org.

⁴⁵ S/2025/271, para. 39.

⁴⁶ A/69/981-S/2015/500, para. 63.

⁴⁷ See <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/emergency.shtml>.

⁴⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/nhri>.

⁴⁹ See https://www.seguridadpublica.go.cr/politica_nacional/politica_nacional_seguridad_publica_2023-2030.pdf; <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-business-units/national-security-and-resilience-group>; <https://www.undp.org/malawi/publications/malawi-national-peace-policy>; and https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf.

atrocities⁵⁰ or an existing body whose task is to monitor the fulfilment of State obligations regarding human rights or the rule of law. Establishing and training these domestic focal points may facilitate the mainstreaming of an atrocity prevention perspective across domestic institutions.

31. In contexts where societies are under stress or experiencing instability, the creation of national atrocity prevention entities has gained momentum.⁵¹ These entities are often composed of public servants, experts and civil society members. Their mandates may include generating early warnings and proposing recommendations to Governments to protect vulnerable groups and to prevent escalation towards atrocity crimes.

32. Too often, the international community has not prevented atrocity crimes or protected populations at risk. In addition to full respect for the Charter of the United Nations, more consistent implementation of the responsibility to protect at the national, regional and multilateral levels, supported by well-coordinated and complementary approaches, can strengthen analytical capacity and responsiveness. Diverse and cooperative networks can also support resilience, reducing the likelihood that any single actor is overburdened or that efforts operate at cross purposes.

VI. Protection in the framework of the responsibility to protect

33. Effective protection is informed by recommendations issued in the context of prevention and early warnings, under conditions ranging from relative stability to acute crisis. Principles and standards must be consistent across national, regional and multilateral levels. Comprehensive and coordinated responses are stronger when they build on existing mechanisms, strategies and networks that enable rapid and coherent implementation. Across contexts, the responsibility to protect strives to identify societal vulnerabilities and focuses on the protection of vulnerable populations, while developing strategies to address symptoms and consequences of violence, as well as underlying drivers of violence.

34. In relatively stable contexts, protection measures may include legal reforms to strengthen democratic accountability and the rule of law, educational reforms to promote inclusivity, dialogue and mediation initiatives to reduce tensions and prevent violence⁵² or initiatives to ensure an accurate understanding of past events, whether locally, nationally or regionally. Civil society actors and vulnerable groups may assist in identifying needs and strengthening resilience.

35. In contexts of heightened stress, national, regional and multilateral protection efforts may include initiatives to reduce tensions, promote dialogue and consensus-building and support the peaceful resolution of disputes. The Peacebuilding Commission, for example, supports nationally owned strategies and priorities for peacebuilding and sustaining peace and advises the General Assembly and the Security Council on supporting nationally owned peace efforts.⁵³

36. Integrating a responsibility to protect lens in fact-finding efforts can help to identify specific atrocity drivers and patterns, preparatory acts and the experiences of vulnerable groups,⁵⁴ supporting accountability and providing assistance to affected

⁵⁰ See <https://icglr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/protocol-for-the-prevention-of-the-crime-of-genocide-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-and-all-forms-of-discrimination.pdf>.

⁵¹ A/79/875-S/2025/248, paras. 37 and 40.

⁵² See <https://www.peacecouncil.gov.gh/>.

⁵³ See Security Council resolution 2558 (2020); and https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org/peacebuilding/files/documents/abc_brochure_eng_2025-04-11.pdf.

⁵⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/co-is>.

communities, as well as informing peace processes and reconciliation efforts.⁵⁵ On a national level, government agencies and national monitoring entities, civil society organizations and affected communities are central to collecting information and recommending ways to combat disinformation, hate speech and incitement to violence.

37. The Human Rights Council special procedures commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions can draw attention to patterns of serious violations and abuses.⁵⁶ They produce regular human rights reports on 13 country situations⁵⁷ and 46 thematic areas⁵⁸ that shed light on major challenges related to human rights violations, abuses and atrocity crimes and provide recommendations across a range of issues. Certain investigative mechanisms collect, preserve and analyse evidence of international crimes committed, for use in ongoing and future judicial proceedings. Domestic courts continue to pursue universal jurisdiction cases on atrocity crimes, and several cases are pending before the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.⁵⁹

38. In contexts of escalating armed violence, rapid and sustained protection measures are required to protect populations against atrocity crimes, consistent with applicable international law, including the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. National, regional and international actors should implement timely prevention measures, building upon existing social networks to strengthen trust, ownership, gender sensitivity and contextual understanding.

39. Peace operations have contributed to preventing atrocity crimes and protecting civilians through a range of approaches. Even as the overall number of peace operations has declined in recent years, they remain an important tool to support States in meeting their primary protection responsibilities and in providing protection for civilians from the risk or threat of atrocity crimes. Peace operations require sustained political and financial support from Member States and benefit from enhanced coordination and collaboration with regional organizations and, where applicable, ad hoc or multinational arrangements.

VII. Non-recurrence in the framework of the responsibility to protect

40. Following the commission of atrocity crimes, efforts to ensure non-recurrence should include strengthening institutions, responding to the needs of survivors and affected communities, addressing root causes and implementing structural and legal reforms. For the longer term, integrating prevention into sustained national policies, including through strategies and mechanisms for atrocity prevention, is essential.

41. Ensuring non-recurrence⁶⁰ within the framework of the responsibility to protect aims to address the legacy of atrocity crimes by identifying the enabling factors and transforming the underlying root causes that led to the commission of such crimes. The Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees

⁵⁵ See [A/HRC/60/32](#).

⁵⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/co-is>.

⁵⁷ <https://spinternet.ohchr.org/ViewAllCountryMandates.aspx>.

⁵⁸ <https://spinternet.ohchr.org/ViewAllCountryMandates.aspx?Type=TM>.

⁵⁹ See, for example, International Court of Justice, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia v. Myanmar: 11 States intervening)*, where the Gambia exercised a right under the Convention, available at <https://icj-cij.org/case/178>.

⁶⁰ See Human Rights Council resolution [51/23](#); and [A/HRC/58/36](#).

of non-recurrence identified three main areas of guarantees of non-recurrence at the societal level: (a) ceasing attacks and threats against civil society representatives, including human rights defenders and removing obstacles for civil society; (b) legal empowerment, including at the community level; and (c) creating enabling environments for civil society more broadly.⁶¹

42. Non-recurrence also requires the integration of an atrocity prevention lens in peacemaking processes from the earliest stages of diplomatic, negotiation and mediation initiatives until the post-peace agreement phase. Early integration can support more sustainable outcomes. Efforts to demobilize and reintegrate former combatants into civilian life, to redeploy public services across the country and to reform the security sector often mark the first steps towards sustainable peace.

43. Transitional justice processes, grounded in the mutually reinforcing pillars of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence,⁶² encompass a broad range of judicial and non-judicial measures and are central to overcoming the legacy of atrocity crimes.⁶³ The guidance note of the Secretary-General on transitional justice⁶⁴ can be useful for the design of sustained processes.

44. Both the acknowledgement of facts and the broader understanding of root causes of violence should inform in-depth societal reforms. Accountability measures, both retributive and restorative, should contribute to securing the facts, preventing revisionism, dignifying survivors and ensuring the sustainable reintegration of former perpetrators, based on the full acknowledgement of the truth and the admission of responsibility.

45. Non-recurrence efforts must be context-specific, nationally owned and informed by survivors and affected communities.⁶⁵ They should result in encompassing national prevention strategies that include protection policies, legislation against discrimination and training that strengthen robust State and civil society capacities for prevention, protection, dialogue and mediation. Importantly, these domestic efforts to ensure non-recurrence must also be supported at the regional and multilateral levels, ensuring that this long-term endeavour is supported by a wide range of actors. Over time, ensuring non-recurrence efforts should contribute to sustained prevention policies, as the strategies, mechanisms and norms of protecting civilian populations become embedded in institutions and everyday life.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

46. Building on the 2025 recommendation to develop strategic and technical guidance for implementing the responsibility to protect at the national, regional and multilateral levels, the present report offers conceptual references and concrete ways to operationalize this commitment in a sustained manner at all times, through periods of political stability and periods of emerging risk, active crisis and post-conflict recovery.

47. At the national level, Member States are encouraged, consistent with their constitutional and legal frameworks, to designate or establish a domestic focal point

⁶¹ A/HRC/30/42, paras. 77–91.

⁶² See A/HRC/37/65.

⁶³ See A/HRC/21/46.

⁶⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/guidance-note-secretary-general-transitional-justice-strategic-tool>.

⁶⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2025/03/transitional-justice-confronting-past-building-future>; <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2020/02/justice-past-crimes-can-build-shared-future>; and <https://www.undp.org/rolhr/justice/transitional-justice>.

and associated institutional arrangements to support risk assessment and early warning and to inform the development of sustained prevention and protection policies.

48. At the subregional, regional and multilateral levels, relevant organizations and entities are encouraged to integrate an atrocity prevention lens into early warning, mediation, peace, security and accountability frameworks, in order to reinforce preventive diplomacy and coordinated protection measures aligned with international law.

49. Member States are encouraged to consider becoming parties to all relevant instruments of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law, as well as to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and to incorporate applicable international obligations at the national level. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide should be universally ratified and fully implemented by State Parties. Member States are also encouraged to engage proactively with accountability exercises, including the universal periodic review and relevant regional and multilateral review processes, including through an atrocity prevention lens.

50. Finally, Member States are encouraged to continue their engagement with the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect and other relevant parts of the United Nations system, in order to develop and apply concrete approaches that support consistent and sustained implementation of the responsibility to protect at all levels.
