



BUDAPEST CENTRE
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL
PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE
AND MASS ATROCITIES

Budapest, January 2015

Summary of Activities

Budapest Centre for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities

Years 2011-2014

CONTEXT

Armenia, the Holocaust, Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, Darfur: different in time and place, analogous in the inability of local and international actors to prevent the perpetration of the crime of crimes and other mass atrocities. Clearly, to make tangible progress in this field, the manifested political will of international actors should be further strengthened and coupled with knowledge, expertise, experience and resources.

Guided by the political will to enhance the contribution of Europe to the efforts of the International Community to prevent genocide, in 2006, a Steering Committee chaired by David Hamburg, President Emeritus of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and Chairman of the United Nations Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention, and Javier Solana, High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, recommended the creation of an International Centre for the Prevention of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity in Europe. The Hungarian Government responded to the invitation by preparing a Feasibility Study on the establishment of an adequate organization in 2008-2009. Based on the outcome of the study, the Central European University and the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church decided to establish the Foundation for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, which was registered in Budapest on December 20, 2010. The Founders established the Budapest Centre as a dedicated operational body in Europe to promote and contribute to the international efforts and increase the role of Europe, including the European Union, in preventing genocide and mass atrocities across the globe.

The Budapest Centre is an unbiased, non-governmental international entity that works to bridge the gap between early warning and early action in the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. To this end, the Centre focuses its activities and offers its expertise and experience in conflict prevention, human rights and international and humanitarian law. The scope is to further political will, produce assessments of situations at risk and practical recommendations for responding to threats, develop capabilities and skills to generate timely and effective preventive action by international actors and implementing the Responsibility to Protect.



Since its inception the Budapest Centre set up a staff composed of international experts, researchers, international lawyers, analysts, dialogue facilitators and diplomats seeking to support and complement the activities of Governments, the United Nations, regional organizations, the European Union and other international actors.

STRUCTURE OF ACTIVITIES

The activities of the Budapest Centre are built on the following main pillars:

I. Prevention Policy Planning Programme

The Programme is aimed at:

- Preparation of specific reports on the countries at risk of mass atrocities, particularly in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, the Balkans, South Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East;
- Elaboration of practical recommendations and response strategies for international actors on the basis of informal consultations with stakeholders, best-practices and lessons-learned;
- Contribution to the methodological framework for early-warning and early-response activities.

II. Programme of Research and Cooperation

The Programme is designed to support the activities within the Preventive Policy Planning Programme, working in close partnerships with top universities across Europe, including the Central European University in Budapest, Roma Tre University and LUISS University in Rome. The Programme is aimed at:

- Conducting in-depth research to support daily preventive activities, exploring the background of international law and international relations and enhancing the theoretical framework of the Responsibility to Protect;
- Building up capabilities and skills at the regional and national levels in mass atrocities prevention;
- Creating synergies and enhancing collaboration among international actors;
- Developing a database of international, regional, national and local institutions, organizations and individuals working in the field of genocide and mass atrocities prevention.

III. Dialogue facilitation

Dialogue is particularly valued by the Budapest Centre as an effective tool to address mass atrocity threats, counter extremism, enhance democracy and societal cohesion. Therefore, the Centre seeks to spread the culture of dialogue worldwide and develops skills in dialogue facilitation.

MAIN RESULTS OF THE ACTIVITIES



During the last four years, the Budapest Centre

- published, in 2013, a Report with recommendations prepared by international experts to assess EU Capabilities to Prevent Mass Atrocities and promoted its implementation;
- prepared in-depth analyses on countries threatened by mass atrocities;
- organized skill-building exercises in the Visegrad countries;
- arranged numerous workshops combining researchers and practitioners to discuss challenges related to the Responsibility to Protect;
- organized series of seminars for students in universities;
- elaborated criteria for evaluation of indicators on skill-building activities;
- organized events on the challenges of hate speech and “difficult dialogues” in responding to hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and anti-Roma activities;
- signed Memorandum of Understanding with several partners i.a. the UN Office on Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region;
- joined the International Coalition on the Responsibility to Protect and the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office;
- established the cell of a Research Centre of Excellence in 2012;
- recently established the cell of a Risk Assessment Team;
- released the Budapest Centre Newsletter, a periodic publication.

Recently, the EDU Commission for Accreditation Standards awarded the Centre with Full Institutional Accreditation.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Presently, the Budapest Centre is:

- preparing specific reports relating to mass atrocity threats in the Middle East Region and the Balkans;
- launching a mapping of the capabilities possessed by some regional organizations in Africa to prevent mass atrocities; researching horizontal aspects (gender, development, private sector, religion, national/regional capacities) of mass atrocities;
- promoting the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report on EU capabilities to prevent mass atrocities;
- working on building up capabilities to challenge mass atrocities within the Visegrad Group, enhancing collaboration among its members;
- developing education skills in Bosnia and Herzegovina to prevent genocide and mass atrocities;
- working on training dialogue facilitators and launching dialogue processes between Roma and non-Roma Hungarians at the community level and preparing a dialogue series for students in Hungary.

