

Sarah Pierson

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**Intervention of the United States of America
Human Rights Council 27 – Geneva
Panel on the Role of Prevention in the Promotion & Protection
of Human Rights, September 18, 2014**

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Thank you, Mr. President.

A most troubling aspect of recent atrocities is the concern that they could have been prevented had the international community responded earlier and more appropriately.

Tens of thousands of lives could have been saved. The future of whole ethnic groups, states, societies, indeed the world, could have been transformed for the better.

Through reflection on those failures to act – Rwanda, Bosnia, Darfur, Sri Lanka, Syria – we appreciate the vital role that prevention plays in the promotion and protection of human rights.

The United States commends the Secretary General for instituting the “Rights Up Front” initiative, which recognizes the crucial need to respond early to developing situations in order to help prevent human rights violations and potential atrocities.

This vital framework should enjoy universal support, and its call for action must be internalized by all states.

We know that prevention strategies can succeed. Most recently, in the Sinjar mountains of Iraq, we witnessed how cooperative action prevented a massacre of members of the Yezidi community.

Widespread communications technology has enhanced our ability to detect early warning signs of atrocities and mass human rights violations.

This presents us with the opportunity to take appropriate preventive action, including by diplomatic intervention and multilateral action.

The United States will continue to work with the UN and others to focus on prevention as a critical means of promoting and protecting the human rights of all individuals.

Could the panelists explain the role that special procedure mandate holders play in the prevention framework? How can they support the Rights Up Front model and how can they assist in atrocity prevention?

Thank you.

