

# UNITED NATIONS PRESS RELEASE



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## **Special Advisers of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Francis Deng, and on the Responsibility to Protect, Edward Luck, on the contemporary relevance of the commitment to prevent genocide and related crimes.**

(New York, 9 December 2011) The Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect remind states of the contemporary relevance of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

“Many of the conflicts that have erupted over this past year stem from long-standing grievances and inequalities between national, ethnical, racial, or religious groups, the groups protected by the Genocide Convention” stressed Mr. Deng. “Addressing these inequalities through early and sustained engagement to prevent inter-group tensions from escalating is essential to save lives and build tolerant and equitable societies, in which human rights are respected and all citizens can participate on an equal footing.

“The 1948 Convention was an early embodiment of the commitment to protect vulnerable populations worldwide from mass atrocities. Today, as the cornerstone of the concept of the principle of the Responsibility to Protect, this commitment is more accepted and more relevant than ever,” stated Mr. Luck. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, Member States made a clear and unequivocal commitment to protect all populations by preventing genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as well as their incitement.

“We call on Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations, civil society and the United Nations system to work together to prevent genocide and other atrocity crimes as a matter of the highest priority,” urged the Special Advisers. “Doing so will demonstrate our common humanity, our fundamental values, and our collective and individual determination not to repeat the mistakes of the past.”

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