



The Peace Alliance

Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act (S. 2551) Talking Points

S. 2551, The Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act is bipartisan legislation from Senators Cardin and Tillis that seeks to improve the ability of the United States to proactively work to prevent genocide and mass atrocities by institutionalizing and strengthening existing efforts.

- It does this by:
 - Authorizing the Atrocities Prevention Board.
 - Authorizing the Complex Crises Fund.
 - Training all Foreign Service Officers in recognizing early warning signs of emerging conflict or atrocities, and in methods of early action, prevention and response.
 - Making Atrocities Prevention the official policy of the United States.

The Atrocities Prevention Board

- The Atrocities Prevention Board is a high level interagency working group that was created in 2010 to coordinate an interagency approach to preventing mass atrocities, integrate early warning systems, oversee development and implementation of atrocities prevention strategies, and conduct atrocities specific planning.
- The Atrocities Prevention Board is credited for the unprecedented speed with which the US was able to respond and to mitigate further violence in the Central African Republic, including allocation of resources through the Complex Crises Fund.
- Authorizing the Atrocities Prevention Board makes Administration policy on atrocities response more accountable to Congress and ensures that institutions are in place to improve the capabilities of future administrations.

The Complex Crises Fund

- The Complex Crises Fund (CCF) provides unprogrammed money for the State Department and USAID to prevent and respond to unforeseen crises.
- In just a few short years, it has become one of the most highly demanded tools in the US foreign policy toolkit, allowing the State Department and USAID to make rapid investments in prevention, stabilization, and crisis response.
- In 2014, funds from the CCF have been used for conflict mitigation between refugees and hosts in Jordan, and community peacebuilding in the Central African Republic.

The Importance of Prevention

- With a focus on effective prevention and quick, flexible responses to emerging crises, the United States can more effectively respond to atrocities, which the administrations of both George W. Bush and Barack Obama have recognized as a key moral and national security of the United States.
- Working to recognize problems early and prevent them from growing into costly threats to US Security. The Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act makes the world safer for ourselves and for innocent people everywhere.

Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act Frequently Asked Questions

Why is authorizing these programs important?

- Authorizing the Atrocities Prevention Board and Complex Crises Fund ensures that these tools will be in place for future administrations, giving future Presidents a groundwork of tools to build on when trying to improve on the legacies of Presidents Bush and Obama.
- Authorizing makes these programs, and US atrocities prevention strategy more broadly, more accountable to Congress, improving oversight and effectiveness.

Why didn't the Atrocities Prevention Board do more on Syria?

- The Atrocities Prevention Board is an interagency coordinating body that works to identify future concerns and coordinate upstream responses, and that upstream intervention has been effective in situations like the Central African Republic and Burundi.
- The crisis in Syria was recognized early, and many actions were and are being taken to address local issues and provide humanitarian relief.
- However, the crisis in Syria is not one that can be resolved through programmatic actions. It instead requires a high level political resolution, which the Atrocities Prevention Board cannot provide.