

Building National Architectures for the Prevention of Mass Atrocities and Genocide

Sub-Regional Initiatives as a Support to National Architectures

a) What are the challenges today of building national architectures?

- Understanding / Misconception of RtP: Awareness raising regarding RtP needs to be continued ten years after the framework has been adopted. Main misconception:
 - RtP is understood as infringing into state sovereignty mainly in South East Asia. Same applies in Latin America
 - RtP is understood as using military force – although it is meant to focus on prevention
 - RtP is often understood as a western norm
- There is a gap between statements made at the UN and the action taken. Disconnect remains problematic in many places
- There is a gap in financial capacity to prioritize atrocity prevention. Even if there is a strong national commitment in some countries funds are not always allocated to enact.
- Political challenges prevail in many places:
 - A common understanding on WHY a regional committee is needed is lacking in many places;
 - Competing national interests may interfere with the implementation of regional atrocity prevention initiatives.
 - National mechanisms must be established to produce evidence about things happening in the regions and vice versa; evidence from the region is brought to a national level that must be ready to react quickly.
 - There is a need to reengineer international principles to make them applicable for the national level.
- Ethnicity is a challenge in many places that easily increases in politically tense environment among national borders.

- A context specific understanding of justice is needed: A disconnect between the international and national level and traditional approaches prevail (ex. Kony is brought before the ICC – Many people in the region claimed to judge him in the region. The reasons:
 - It is important to connect the international juridical system with local community based elder system that pre-existed and that are culturally accepted.
 - Traditional systems with an exchange of goods must be integrated. This may be crucial to strengthen the international juridical system.
 - Cultural juridical processes must be respected. Although Kony is judged in The Hague, cultural judgements are requested in the region. The same applies for Gacaca judgements that brought a lot of people on board

b) What have we learned about building national architectures?

- 5 challenges identified:
 - Context is key for atrocity prevention; an in-depth understanding of a context is critical for such a highly sensitive issue as RtP.
 - Holistic process must be used: take both a top down AND a bottom up approach.
 - CSO are key actors in atrocity prevention. CSOs are responsible for advancing bottom up approach and for monitoring the situation. Governments have the primary responsibility to protect but they benefit from a enabled CSO that contributes
 - Seek atrocity prevention champions and enable them
 - Actions of atrocity prevention can still be taken also in the most dire situation. Creative action is often needed at the grass root level.
- Confidence building measures among all different stakeholders are needed
- Sustainable partnerships between CSOs must be established / networks created
- Best practices among peers must be shared (ex. Kenya – Argentina on memorialization)
- The rule of traditional institutions must be strengthened
- Early warning must be increased on the regional level too; monitor / document a particular situation in order to be ready to act quickly

c) What could be the contribution of GAAMAC to address these challenges?

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d) Other specific and very relevant issue to be recorded?

- Create the environment to talk about RtP
- Debate takes mostly part in English. If national architectures must be built it must be made sure that no one is exclude due to language barriers
- Governments and CSOs must equally be considered in atrocity prevention