



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Briefing
Co-hosted by the Senate Human Rights Caucus

Witness Biographies

Atrocity Prevention and Early Warning:
The U.S. Government Framework and Côte d'Ivoire

Panel I



D. Wes Rist is the Deputy Executive Director at the American Society of International Law (ASIL), where he has worked since 2012, previously as the Director of Education and Research. He works on atrocity prevention and international criminal justice issues in the field of international law, having conducted research and trainings on these and related issues around the world. Wes is a member of the Prevention and Protection Working Group, a collection of civil society organizations that coordinate on genocide and mass atrocity prevention activities. He holds a JD from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and an LLM (with distinction) from UWE Bristol Faculty of Law in the United Kingdom.



Naomi Kikoler is the director of the Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide. As the Center's deputy director she led Center's policy engagement with the United States government and work on Bearing Witness countries, including undertaking the documentation of the commission of genocide by ISIS. Previously she developed and implemented the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect's work on populations at risk and efforts to advance R2P globally and led the Centre's advocacy, including targeting the United Nations Security Council. Prior to joining the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect in 2008, she worked on national security and refugee law and policy for Amnesty International Canada. She has also worked for the UN Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide, the Office of the Prosecutor at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement at the Brookings Institution, and she worked as an election monitor in Kenya with the Carter Center.



Éric Aimé Semien is a human rights advocate based in Cote d'Ivoire and founder and chairperson of the Ivorian Observatory for Human Rights (OIDH) where he focuses on the reinforcement of rule of law institutions, transitional justice, and electoral processes in Cote d'Ivoire and other African countries. Mr. Semien has worked to monitor all post-election trials in Cote d'Ivoire from 2011 to 2018. He has worked to monitor the Bemba, Taylor and Gbagbo – Blé Goudé trial at the international criminal court in the Hague between 2009 and 2019. Mr. Semien has led several advocacy missions and has spoken at the UN Human Rights council in Geneva and at the African Union.

Moderator



Tomás F. Husted is an Analyst in African Affairs at the Congressional Research Service, where he covers the littoral countries of West and Central Africa. Prior to joining CRS, he worked with the International Rescue Committee in Sierra Leone, the National Democratic Institute, and the Enough Project. He received a Master's in International Affairs at the George Washington University Elliott School of International Affairs.