

House Foreign Affairs Committee
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Hearing
on
Reducing the Risk of Mass Atrocities

November 14, 2018 – 10:00 a.m.
2200 Rayburn House Office Building

STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Submitted by:

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Member of Congress
U.S. House of Representatives

“Never again.” That is what the international community pledged after the Second World War, to never idly stand by as genocide and mass atrocities occur.

However, since the Second World War mass atrocities have been committed in many countries, resulting in the suffering and deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Millions more have been forced to flee, generating profound humanitarian, political, and national security consequences.

At this time, 68.5 million people have been forcibly displaced globally, of whom 25.4 million are refugees. This is the highest level of displacement on record.¹

Almost every two seconds, a person is forcibly displaced as a result of conflict or persecution.²

Today as mass atrocities are happening around the world including Myanmar, Yemen, and Syria, just to name a few, the United States and the international community still struggle to develop a coherent and comprehensive response to mass atrocities committed by state and non-state actors.

I am proud that the House of Representatives passed H.R.3030, the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, that I cosponsored, establishes a Mass Atrocities Task Force and states that it is U.S. policy to regard the prevention of genocide and other atrocity crimes as a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility.

There is more that Congress can and should do to prevent mass atrocities and I believe that this hearing is very timely.

¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>

² Ibid

I want to thank the panel for coming to testify today. Your views are very important to our work.