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**Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS) welcomes U.S. Government's plan to form Atrocities Prevention Board**

**MONTREAL, August 8, 2011** - The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies of Concordia University (MIGS) welcomes the White House announcement of a presidential directive on preventing mass atrocities. The directive, seeks to improve the US government's capacity to prevent genocide and mass atrocities by creating a standing interagency Atrocities Prevention Board that proclaims "Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States."

By bringing together officials from the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, and other agencies, the Atrocities Prevention Board will advise the government and ensure that the United States is better prepared to "engage early, proactively and decisively to prevent threats from evolving into large-scale civilian atrocities," as stated in the directive.

This announcement corresponds to key recommendations in MIGS' book *Mobilizing the Will to Intervene: Action to Prevent Mass Atrocities (W2I)*, published in 2010 by McGill-Queen's University Press, which underlines the importance of enhancing the executive branch's ability to coordinate policy by creating an interagency policy committee.

The U.S. Government has already acted on a number of W2I's key recommendations including the creation of a new senior position in the White House focusing on mass atrocities, and the inclusion of mass atrocity prevention as a foreign policy priority in the National Security Strategy.

In 2005, all countries seated at the United Nations endorsed the *Responsibility to Protect*, which is an international political commitment to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes. This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Responsibility to Protect*.

MIGS continues to disseminate its findings and policy recommendations on how the governments of the U.S. and Canada can improve their capacities to better prevent mass atrocities, and applauds this move from the Obama Administration as an important step towards putting the *Responsibility to Protect* into practice.

MIGS looks forward to the appointment to this advisory board of strong, well informed officials who recognize the national interest in applying a whole of government approach to the timely and effective prevention of mass atrocities.

**Related links:**

- [Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies at Concordia University](#)

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