

## 39<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council

### High-level panel discussion to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

*Concept note (as of 4 September 2018)*

<b>Date and venue:</b>	<b>Thursday 13 September 2018, 10 a.m. - noon, Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva</b> (will be broadcast live and archived on <a href="http://webtv.un.org">http://webtv.un.org</a> )
<b>Objectives:</b>	The Human Rights Council will commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide through a high-level panel discussion, pursuant to Council resolution 37/26.
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>H.E. Mr. Vojislav Šuc</b> , President of the Human Rights Council
<b>Opening statements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ms. Michelle Bachelet</b>, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</li><li>• <b>H.E. Mr. Zohrab Mnatsakanyan</b>, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia</li></ul>
<b>Panellists:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Mr. Adama Dieng</b>, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, former Registrar of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (2001-2012)</li><li>• <b>Ms. Kimberly Prost</b>, Judge of the International Criminal Court, former judge of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (2006-2010)</li><li>• <b>Mr. William Schabas</b>, Professor of international law at Middlesex University (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and Professor of international criminal law and human rights at Leiden University (Netherlands)</li><li>• <b>Mr. Fabian Salvioli</b>, Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence</li></ul>
<b>Outcome:</b>	OHCHR summary report on the panel discussion to be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its 40 <sup>th</sup> session.
<b>Mandate:</b>	In its resolution 37/26, the Human Rights Council considered that the seventieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted on 9 December 1948 and succeeded by the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the next day, provides an important opportunity for Member States and the international community to reaffirm the significance of the Convention and to continue their efforts to prevent and punish the crime of genocide. The Human Rights Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize at the thirty-ninth session of the Council a high-level panel discussion to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide .
<b>Format:</b>	The duration of the panel discussion will be strictly limited to two hours. A maximum of one hour will be set aside for the podium, including opening statements, panellist presentations, and their responses to questions and concluding remarks. Speaking time limits for the panellists and guests, if any, will be calculated based on the maximum one hour limit for the podium.

States and observers, including national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), intervening from the floor will also have a maximum of one hour. Each speaker will have two minutes to raise issues and to ask panellists questions. The list of speakers for the discussion will be established at the beginning of the panel and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups will be moved to the beginning of the list.

The practice of having two slots for Member and observer States (2x12), NHRIs (2x1) and NGOs (2x2) will be maintained but the possibility for panellists to intervene in-between will depend entirely on the time used at the start of the panel.

Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

**Background:** The General Assembly, in its resolution 260 A (III) of 9 December 1948, approved and proposed for signature and ratification or accession the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In its Article I, the Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

In the Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The year 2018 marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It offers an important opportunity for Member States and the international community to reaffirm the significance of the Convention and to continue their efforts to prevent and punish the crime of genocide.

**Useful documents:**

- Human Rights Council [resolution 37/26](#) of 23 March 2018 entitled “Prevention of genocide”
- The [Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#), approved by General Assembly resolution 260 A (III) of 9 December 1948, and entered into force on 12 January 1951

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