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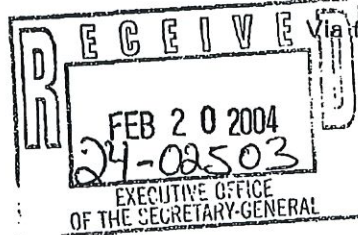


Prevention of Genocide

Mr. Kofi Annan
Secretary-General
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017

Via facsimile: (212) 963-4879

18 February 2004



Dear Mr. Annan,

The International Service for Human Rights would like to express its strong support for the proposals formulated in your keynote address to the Stockholm International Forum on Preventing Genocide on 26 January 2004.

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The International Service recognises and applauds the important steps that have already been taken at the international level to punish those responsible for committing crimes of genocide and deter the perpetration of mass human rights violations, including through the establishment of ad-hoc international tribunals and the creation of the International Criminal Court. However, the International Service is also convinced of the need to set up an effective preventive mechanism that could function within the framework of the mandate of UN Security Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

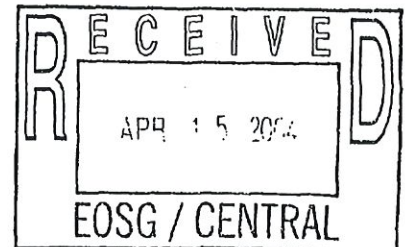
As is rightly stated in your address and widely recognised today, the crimes of genocide that we witnessed in a number of countries at the close of the century may have been prevented had member states of the UN reacted appropriately, with the necessary political will and unity required to respond to the early warning signs that preceded these crimes.

The appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the prevention of genocide, supported by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and mandated to report directly to the UN Security Council, would clearly put pressure on member States represented in the Security Council to respond to specific alerts related to the possible perpetration of these crimes. Such a mechanism would reinforce the obligation that States have to protect populations and prevent genocide.

We strongly support your Initiative and would like to join Human Rights Watch in urging you to make this a cornerstone of the upcoming commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the genocide committed in Rwanda. We would also like to offer our support and availability to participate in future activities relating to the establishment of any such preventive mechanism or body within the United Nations.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Sidoti
Christopher Sidoti
Director
International Service for Human Rights.



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