

Aug. 4 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2011

Statement on Congressional Action on Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Legislation

August 4, 2011

I'm pleased that leaders in Congress are working together to break the impasse involving the FAA so that tens of thousands of construction workers and others can go back to

work. We can't afford to let politics in Washington hamper our recovery, so this is an important step forward.

Directive on Creation of an Interagency Atrocities Prevention Board and Corresponding Interagency Review

August 4, 2011

Presidential Study Directive/PSD-10

Memorandum for the Vice President; the Secretary of State; the Secretary of the Treasury; the Secretary of Defense; the Attorney General; the Secretary of Homeland Security; Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff; Director of the Office of Management and Budget; United States Trade Representative; Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations; Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor; Director of National Intelligence; Counsel to the President; Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs; Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Chief Executive Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation; Director of the Peace Corps; Deputy Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor to the Vice President; Director of the National Security Agency; and Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency

Subject: Creation of an Interagency Atrocities Prevention Board and Corresponding Interagency Review

Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.

Our security is affected when masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods. America's repu-

tation suffers, and our ability to bring about change is constrained, when we are perceived as idle in the face of mass atrocities and genocide. Unfortunately, history has taught us that our pursuit of a world where states do not systematically slaughter civilians will not come to fruition without concerted and coordinated effort.

Governmental engagement on atrocities and genocide too often arrives too late, when opportunities for prevention or low-cost, low-risk action have been missed. By the time these issues have commanded the attention of senior policy makers, the menu of options has shrunk considerably and the costs of action have risen.

In the face of a potential mass atrocity, our options are never limited to either sending in the military or standing by and doing nothing. The actions that can be taken are many—they range from economic to diplomatic interventions, and from non-combat military actions to outright intervention. But ensuring that the full range of options is available requires a level of governmental organization that matches the methodical organization characteristic of mass killings.

Sixty-six years since the Holocaust and 17 years after Rwanda, the United States still lacks a comprehensive policy framework and a corresponding interagency mechanism for preventing and responding to mass atrocities and genocide. This has left us ill-prepared to engage early, proactively, and decisively to prevent threats from evolving into large-scale civilian atrocities.