



28 March 2014- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon will be in Brussels next week, from 1 to 3 April. During his visit to the European capital the Secretary General will address the International Conference on Genocide Prevention.

Despite the atrocities of the Holocaust, the world has been exposed to repeated cases of mass atrocities. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda and heralds the upcoming commemoration of the 1995 Srebrenica genocide. The conference is organized by the Royal Institute for International Relations in cooperation with the European Union, the African Union and the UN. It will be hosted in Egmont Palace and will assemble politicians, international scholars and academics from various fields that will gather to discuss and present their findings, along with discussing parliament and institutional responses, about recent genocides.

The two-day program, from 31 March to 1 April, will cover four aspects: the status of academic research on genocide, an integrated international human rights law from the international criminal law perspective, the role of civil society and parliaments and institutional responses. The program for the first day will cover academic research, international legal framework and civil society. Mr. Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, will give the welcoming speech.

The second day's program will focus on the political aspects surrounding recent genocides. It will follow the same format as the previous day with keynote speakers introducing the topics of Political Actions, Reactions and Initiatives and will be followed by a discussion with a panel of international political experts. The highlight of the conference will be the High Level Political Session. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, and Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chair of the Commission of the African Union will provide institutional responses following individual ministerial interventions.

In order to consolidate the responses and the information given over two days, the conference will be concluded by a "call for action" by the chair. One of the expected outcomes will be linked to the UN's Responsibility to Protect (R2P) policy. The R2P policy states that it is a state's primary duty to protect its population from mass atrocities, that the international community must encourage state's to maintain this responsibility and that the international community has a responsibility to use appropriate measures to protect populations from these crimes and, if necessary, to take collective action should a state fail to exercise its obligations. Amongst other actions, one expected outcome is the call for the creation of Focal Points for Prevention (FOP) in UN Member States to develop systems of prevention and accountability for mass atrocities.