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Terminating the Evil Atrocity of Genocide

Ethnic persecution, forced labor, lack of religious freedom, violent, uncontrollable, unrestrained human trafficking—these are simply a mere chunk of the broad picture of human genocide. Sixty-nine years ago, from 1939 to 1945, an estimated eleven million innocent lives were wiped clean off the face of the earth. It was a mournful period in history, known today as the Holocaust. Soon after, the United Nations vowed they would “Never Again” let anything close to genocide every blow the world off its feet as did the Holocaust. It has been made apparent throughout the years that “Never Again” has not abided by its promise. Following the Holocaust, the bloodshed of numerous genocides has stained the world’s history and is still continuing to do so up to this very day. The United Nations has not used their resources to the maximum potential. There has been an excessive amount of useless, feeble attempts to stop genocide. My generation must ensure that the members of the United Nations put their individual problems aside and for once, do what they were created for—to promote peace and fuse together to make the issue of genocide a worldly concern.

Before any advances can be made to put a stop to genocide, the first chance that is absolutely necessary is to strengthen the political will of world leaders. Nothing...*nothing* can be improved upon if leaders of the United Nations do not have the political will to solve the problem. The first step is to formally recognize genocide immediately, not to wait until thousands have been murdered. In 1994, the Clinton Administration avoided calling the crisis in Rwanda “genocide,” because it could commit the United States “to actually do something” (Power 11). They refused to intervene because it was not really “genocide.” Because of this refusal of recognition, thousands were killed. In 2003, during the Darfur crisis, once again, nothing was done because

world leaders refused to officially name the crisis “genocide.” Thousands more were killed (U.N. News Service 5). Regardless of their re-occurring mistakes, leaders are continuous in making them over and over again. They need to learn from their past mistakes and improve from them. After the crisis in Rwanda, Bill Clinton admitted, “We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide” (*New York Times* A12). By formally recognizing genocide, it would enable other countries to help prevent the killings as well (U.N. News Service 5). Many American presidents since Franklin D. Roosevelt have refused to intervene into these problem areas because it is not in their “political interest” (Power 4). The United States, along with the additional countries of the United Nations, are simply too self-absorbed within their own individual affairs. “Never Again” has proven itself a strong phrase with empty meaning. None of the countries of the United Nations want to take time out of their daily lives to deal with it. It is similar to a game of hot-potato. One country keeps trying to dump the problem onto another country and eventually somebody is left to deal with it. The game needs to stop. These countries need to *merge together* in order to attack the matter. If the United Nations could obtain a strong political will to seriously make some changes, they can solve the problem once and for all. Having a strong political will to make changes and help millions of defenseless people is the first imperative action in getting one step ahead. Without a political will, there cannot ever be a way.

The next step in stopping genocide is to abolish the Security Council veto power. The United Nations is currently paralyzed. Any attempted action to help their genocidal countries can be discontinued with just one simple veto. Many attempts at invading have been halted because one member disagrees with the action. Soon, members lose hope trying to develop action plans because “there will always be a veto” (Glazer 10). Many members of the U.N. are terrified at the idea of forming a world army because it could show an act of aggression (Glazer 8). In 1995, during the Bosnian War, the United Nations actually did send some troops. Unfortunately, the group was so insufficient, they were overrun within hours (Glazer 10). This is a wonderful example of a useless attempt. You cannot enter a genocidal area unless you have a sufficient amount of troops at hand. But this cannot be fulfilled until veto power is abolished. In 2003, in the region of

Congo, U.N. peacekeepers were outnumbered and found themselves with a scant amount of ammunition. Because of their inability to fight, the tribal killings in the Congo were not able to be stopped (Glazer 11). As humans, we have the ability to communicate and compromise, and we need to use it. The Security Council veto power is acting as a brick wall to the solution. It needs to be knocked down; otherwise, we will never reach the solution behind it.

The final and last resort in attempting to stop genocide is to invade with force. These weak attempts are ridiculous. In 2004, the U.N. passed a resolution giving the Sudanese government thirty days to disarm, or they would act. The Sudanese government did not disarm, and the U.N. did not act (U.N. News Service 4). During Bill Clinton's time in office, he urged the Rwandan government to negotiate with the minority groups being persecuted. It had no effect and in three months, 800,000 minority Tutsis were killed. We need to *wholeheartedly* give everything we have without purposely suppressing our resources. As one member put it, "We don't intervene because the political risks of not acting are less than the political risks of acting" (Glazer 5). That is entirely fool-headed. Nothing was ever accomplished without risks. If people did not want to do things because there were too many risks, then where would the world be today? As history has shown, empty threats have proved themselves worthless when faced against genocide. While it is true that peace should always be a first option, sometimes it needs to be purposely disregarded as an option. There are occurrences when countries are lucky enough to achieve peace through peace. But there are times when peaceful attempts are useless. In the end, the only option left is to shove peace aside and intervene with force to get the job done.

My generation needs to prioritize the matter of genocide above all. Many steps need to be taken in order to achieve this goal. It may take a very long time, but many things can be accomplished by taking a few small steps at a time to improve the strength and power of the United Nations individually and collectively. The issue of genocide cannot be solved overnight, just as Rome was not built in a day. It may take over a century, but by making strong attempts, the U.N. *will* become strong enough, physically and mentally, to conquer this evil. Actions for improvement need to be taken right now,

and only when we are able to help ourselves, are we able to help millions in the present, and in the future.

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