

Human rights in world politics

Law



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Genocide Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959), a Polish Jewish legal scholar, coined the term "genocide" in 1943, from the roots *genos* (Greek for family, tribe or race) and *-cide* (Latin - *occidere*, to massacre). Lemkin's original genocide definition was narrow, as it addressed only crimes against "national groups" rather than "groups" in general. However, it was broad at the same time as it included not only physical genocide, but also acts aimed at destroying the culture and livelihood of the group (Genocide). There have been a number of debates regarding the proper definition of the word "genocide". The exclusion of social and political groups as targets of genocide in legal definition of genocide has been debated. Some historians and sociologists often refer to social and political groups when discussing about genocide. However, the generally accepted notion on genocide is the, it is the purposeful annihilation of a social identity (Genocide).

The term genocide should be redefined to include smaller groups rather than national groups with larger population. Discrimination or intended killings of small groups according to their race, ethnic background or even religious beliefs, whether perpetuated by individual or insignificant groups should be included in the context of genocide. As history had shown, killings on catastrophic proportion usually started out in unchecked and insignificant killings on lesser degree that later eventually escalate to a full-pledge genocide.

In order for genocide to develop, the following circumstances must be present: classification, symbolization, dehumanization, organization, polarization, preparation, extermination, and denial. Classification happens when cultures distinguish people into 'us' and 'others' basing on merely on race, religion, nationality, or ethnic background with further naming to such <https://assignbuster.com/human-rights-in-world-politics/>

classifications, thus symbolization arises. Classification and symbolization are common to humankind and do not necessarily result in genocide unless they lead to the next stage, that is dehumanization. Dehumanization happens when one group denies the humanity of the other group.

Dehumanization overcomes the normal human revulsion against murder.

Genocide becomes easy when it is well organized. Most destructive genocide in history was well organized, often by the state (Stanton). The most famous organized genocide is the Holocaust, which was the mass murder of Jews and various other groups during World War II by Third Reich and its collaborators (Genocide). The Nazis planned and executed the mass murder in a systematic way which is known to be 'The final solution.'

The public opinion about war had changed significantly over a couple of decades especially after the world had witnessed the Holocaust and the Second World War. Most people have seen and read about the horrors of war over the news, documentaries, books, and modern day media. Most people do not want it to happen again. Jack Donnelly, a political scientist and author, is right when he contends that there is a new international willingness to respond to genocide and humanitarian crisis during the post cold war era. The culture of today demands expedient success in any war with very few casualties and political leaders are pressured into limiting their clandestine war objectives. With live video feeds via satellite to a global audience, much of the ugliness of mass killings is brought into their homes. This creates a well-informed international community who reacts in real time should a humanitarian crisis occur (Gray).

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