MODERATOR’S GUIDE
The phrase *never again* has been used for decades as a symbol of international resolve to never allow an abomination like the Holocaust to happen again. All nations seem to recognize an obligation to stop future genocides and mass atrocities, even if it means violating the near-sacred sovereignty of another country. That resolve has been tested many times, and too often it has failed.

Since the Holocaust we have seen mass killings take place the world over. In some cases, the slow, deliberate killing of innocent people may have only captured the news media’s attention on occasion, leaving us with the impression that mass killings only happen in the context of war. What might have seemed like isolated incidents are symbolic of a larger epidemic.

Mass violence is a political tool used by those with power for their own strategic objectives. It is not an unpreventable and unmanageable explosion of existing tensions. Ethnic and other social divisions can be manipulated by the powerful, but genocide and mass atrocities do not occur spontaneously. And that means they can be prevented.

Now Showing *Before the Killing Begins: The Politics of Mass Violence* considers how early preventive strategies by governments and the international community should build much-needed capacities within countries. It aims to encourage discussion of how future efforts might better protect populations under threat, giving new meaning to *never again*. The *Before the Killing Begins: The Politics of Mass Violence* DVD is approximately 30 minutes long. We recommend that you allow for at least 30 minutes of dialogue after watching the video.

The Now Showing toolkit contains everything needed to have a successful gathering. In the Event Planner’s Guide is a timeline for setting up the event and tips to get the word out to the community. The Moderator’s Guide provides useful hints on facilitating a successful discussion and the Discussion Guide includes questions to get the audience thinking. The toolkit also includes materials that provide further background on the discussion topics.

**Responsibilities of a Moderator**

1. **Prepare for the event.**
   - Watch the DVD and read through the discussion questions before the event.
   - Ask the event planner to provide you with the additional materials provided by the Stanley Foundation in the *Before the Killing Begins: The Politics of Mass Violence* toolkit so you can review them.
   - If there will be a panel, find out about the panelists beforehand and contact them if necessary.

2. **Guide discussion of the participants.**
   - The moderator should prompt participant discussion by using the provided discussion questions.
• Call on people asking them to identify themselves (unless all participants know one another) before making a comment.

• If you have a large group, be sure to emphasize that comments should be concise and to the point.

• If you feel the discussion has veered off topic, use the provided discussion questions to bring the group back to the topic at hand.

• Consider using the Ground Rules on page 4.

• If microphones are being used, test them before the event starts.

3. **Keep an eye on time.** Be sure to find out from the event planner in advance how long the event will last. The recommended amount of total time is at least one hour.

4. **Wrap up the event.** As the moderator, you can make some concluding remarks to recap discussion. Also, please see the “Event Wrap-Up” section below for additional tips of how to conclude the event.

**Discussion Questions**

We recommend that you pass out the Discussion Guides at the beginning of the event. Before viewing the DVD, ask everyone to review the three suggested discussion questions under “Before you watch, think about:” (below).

• What incidents of genocide or mass atrocity, past or present, come to mind?

• How are mass atrocities different from violence that occurs between warring parties?

• Do you believe there are actions that can be taken by governments or the international community to prevent mass atrocities from occurring?

We have also developed the following suggested discussion questions to encourage dialogue after viewing the DVD. These questions are listed below. They are the same as those in the Discussion Guide provided for event participants.

• Do you believe the international community is living up to its promise of *never again*? If not, what steps need to be taken to give meaning to the promise?

• Is it possible to create powerful enough disincentives for those leaders that would use mass violence as a political tool or, in other words, to keep mass atrocities and genocide from happening through capacity building and other preventive policies? What would some of the disincentives be?
• Is it in our national interest to have policies in place that work to prevent mass atrocities and genocide in other countries?

• In what ways should the United States work with regional (the African Union, for example) or intergovernmental organizations (the United Nations, for example) to address capacity gaps?

• The Responsibility to Protect has three pillars:
  o A nation’s responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.
  o International community support to help nations fulfill this responsibility.
  o If needed, international action if nation’s fail this responsibility.

• Do US policies do enough to address the second pillar before intervention becomes necessary? What about international policies or actions?

• After a country has suffered from violence, how important is peacekeeping and peacebuilding, whether under the auspices of the United Nations or otherwise?

• The Genocide Prevention Task Force, cochaired by Madeleine Albright and William Cohen, in its blueprint for US policymakers recommended that “The American people should build a permanent constituency for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities.” What do you think is the best way to build this constituency? What impact could this constituency have?

Event Wrap-Up

• Please ask people to complete the Event Participant Surveys provided.

• If people are inspired to action, tell them they can consider the following. These suggestions are also listed under the “Take Action” section of the Discussion Guide.
  o Discuss the issue with others.
  o Write an opinion piece for the local newspaper.
  o Raise the issue with elected officials and candidates.
  o Expand their knowledge about the issue by exploring resources available online (see the “Learn More” section).
  o Request the Now Showing Before the Killing Begins: The Politics of Mass Violence toolkit to hold their own event.

• Point out the “Learn More” section on the Discussion Guide and tell people they can take their guide with them.
**Tips for Moderating Group Discussion**

- You might suggest that they make notes for discussion while they are watching the video.

- Keep in mind that you may not get to all of the discussion questions. Use your best judgment to decide if your group needs to move to a new question or not. You may need to interrupt someone if they are dominating the conversation or becoming combative with their comments.

- If you feel the discussion is diverting from the main content of the DVD, then you as the moderator can pose one of the discussion questions listed that hasn’t been addressed.

- Use humor, if appropriate, to diffuse tension.

- Depending on the size of the group, try to engage everyone in the discussion by calling on individuals to offer their opinion.

- Make sure everyone can hear comments made.

- Use your privilege as the moderator to interrupt if necessary and ask people to get to the main point of their comment or question.

- Before the event starts, try to determine if members of the media are present.

- Consider using the Ground Rules below.

- Do the best you can. Remember that it’s okay to say “I don’t know” or “I’m not sure.”

**Setting Ground Rules**

You might consider asking the group to agree on some ground rules for discussion before you begin. Some possible ground rules are:

1. Participants are free to engage in open conversation without fear of exclusion or criticism.
2. Agreement is not the central objective of the dialogue.
3. The discussion has no specific predetermined outcome.
4. Participants will listen to one another without interrupting.