



The Ten Stages of Genocide

Framework Reference Guide

The Ten Stages of Genocide is a framework created by Dr. Gregory Stanton, Director of Genocide Watch. His work aims to predict, prevent, stop, and punish genocide and other forms of mass murder. The ten stages included in this framework outline the common patterns that all genocides have. They can help communities identify and stop potential genocides before they occur. It is possible, and likely, that these stages of genocide will occur out of sequence and/or at the same time. In some cases, they can also be ongoing.

1	Classification In every culture, people use categories to separate societies into various groups. This can lead to an "us" versus "them" mentality. In places where there is less diversity, the majority can make a smaller group the target, making the chance of genocide more likely to occur.
2	Symbolization Labeling different groups through symbols, colors, or dress happens everywhere. It is not necessarily negative. Yet, when combined with hatred, it can lead to later stages of genocide.
3	Discrimination When a group holding power uses law, custom, or political power to deny the rights of other groups. Members of the group(s) with less power have fewer rights and may even lose their citizenship.
4	Dehumanization When one group denies the humanity of another group. Dehumanization can cause the general public to be less shocked by actions such as mass murder. Propaganda during this stage often portrays victims as less than human.
5	Organization During this stage, perpetrators state their intentions to commit genocide. Intimidation tactics are common during this stage. Political and educational institutions may play a key role in motivating the general public to target a group.



6	Polarization During polarization, perpetrators drive groups apart through collective guilt and fear tactics. At this point, disinformation is more widespread. Laws may be created to heighten the "us vs. them" narrative. Often emergency decrees are announced in order to "protect" the dominant group.
7	Preparation The perpetrators prepare for mass murder. Community members from the dominant group are provided incentives and rewards for supporting the cause. In this stage, intention transforms into action.
8	Persecution During this stage the victim group is actively separated from society. They may be forced to leave their homes and live in hostile environments. Perpetrators may deliberately deprive them of resources needed to live.
9	Extermination The mass killing we know as genocide. The term 'extermination' usually refers to the killing of insects and vermin. In the context of genocide, this term is used to further dehumanize victims.
10	Denial The final stage of genocide can take many forms. In some cases, perpetrators attempt to cover up the evidence. In other cases, they deny that any crimes were committed. Denial often begins during the genocide and can last long after, continuing harm for generations.

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