

Workshop on: Atrocity Crimes Prevention through Education in Southeast Asian Region – Secondary Education

Opening remarks by Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Under-Secretary-General, Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide

(Virtual)

Friday September 16, 2022

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very happy to be able to join you today virtually as we are starting the third phase of our project on ‘Atrocity Crimes Prevention through Education in Southeast Asian Region’ with a focus on secondary level education.

From the outset, I would like to express appreciation to our partner, the Documentation Center of Cambodia, for the dedication and commitment shown in the implementation of our joint initiative since commencement in early 2021.

Today’s workshop, and the previous workshops we have organized with DC Cam, is taking place in the framework of a project that my Office, UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, launched in 2020 to strengthen educational responses to atrocity prevention in the Southeast Asia region.

The project is of particular significance to my mandate as the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. My mandate is to monitor and raise alarm over situations across the world where there is a risk of atrocity crimes, by which I mean genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. I am also mandated to raise awareness on the causes and dynamics of these crimes and to strengthen the capacity of Member States, regional organizations and civil society to prevent them.

Since my Office cannot implement its mandate without the collaboration and engagement of others, education becomes one of the key tools for creating awareness and developing expertise on genocide and its prevention. This initiative therefore goes to the core of my mandate.

Teaching about past atrocity crimes, the process and early warning signs that led to their commission, such as discrimination, hate speech and intolerance contributes to early prevention. It is also through education that children learn critical thinking skills and understand their rights. The teacher’s manual that

