

**Centre for International Law
Distinguished Speakers Series**

11 November 2010

11.00am-12.30pm, NUS BTC Blk B, Executive Seminar Room

**Dr Francis Deng
UNSG's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide**

**“Understanding and Preventing Mass Atrocity Crimes :
A Regional Perspective”**

Chairman's Introductory Remarks

1. A very warm welcome to friends and colleagues and to the members of the diplomatic corps.
2. I am not an expert on the law of genocide, but I am an expert on our distinguished speaker, Dr Francis Deng. For this reason, I will make only one point about genocide and many more about Francis Deng.
3. The Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide is 61 years old. It will be 62 on 9 December 2010. The Convention defines genocide as killing with the purpose of exterminating an ethnic or religious group. A paradigm case of genocide was Hitler's attempt to exterminate the Jews. Another example would be the attempt by the Hutus to exterminate the Tutsis in Rwanda. The mass killing of people, such as those perpetrated by Stalin or Pol Pot

do not qualify as genocide within the meaning of the Convention.

4. Dr Francis Deng is clearly and indisputably a brilliant man. He began his career by earning an LLB from the University of Khartoum in Sudan. Once upon a time, that University and law School had a good reputation. One of our former professors and deans, Geoffrey Bartholomew, had taught in Khartoum. Francis then went to another reputable University, Yale University, where he earned his LLM and JSD. Professor S Jayakumar, was his classmate or contemporary at Yale.
5. Dr Deng's career can be divided into three parts:
 - (a) diplomat;
 - (b) academic; and
 - (c) international civil servant.

I will touch briefly on each of the three working lives.

6. First, his diplomatic career. He had served as Sudan's Ambassador to Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the United States. His most senior post was as Sudan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.
7. Second, his academic career. Dr Deng is a prolific writer. He has authored or edited over 30 books as well as two novels. He held teaching or research positions with some of the most

prestigious institutions in the United States, such as, MIT, Library of Congress, Johns Hopkins University, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Woodrow Wilson International Center, the Brookings Institution, the City University of New York and the US Institute of Peace.

8. Third, his career as an international civil servant. From 1967 to 1972, he worked as a Human Rights Officer in the UN Secretariat. From 1992 to 2004, he served as the UNSG's Special Representative on Internally Displaced Persons. This is an important job because there are more such persons than refugees. In 2007, UNSG Ban Ki-Moon appointed him to his current position, with the rank of Under-Secretary-General.

9. It is with great pleasure that I now invite Dr Deng to address us.

Tommy Koh
Chairman
Centre for International Law