

EXCERPTED RtoP STATEMENTS FROM THE 9th SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

7 July 2010

Mr. Çorman, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative (Turkey):

(...) [T]he concepts of the protection of civilians and the **responsibility to protect** should not be mixed up with each other. In our view, they are two different concepts that must not be confused.

H.E. Mr. Ragolini, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative (Italy):

(...) [T]he protection of civilians must also encompass the principle of the **responsibility to protect**. This principle implies that with sovereignty come special responsibilities. Governments must protect their own populations, and the best way to guarantee such protection is to promote human rights, the rule of law and democratic governance. The **responsibility to protect** should be seen as an instrument available to the international community to overcome crises, provided that the conditions referred to in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the Summit Outcome Document (General Assembly resolution 60/1) are met. In this perspective, Italy looks forward to the upcoming informal interactive dialogue of the General Assembly on early warning, assessment and the **responsibility to protect** with a view to further implementing the concept.

Mr. Serrano, Ambassador and Acting Head of the Delegation of the EU (European Union):

(...) While the protection of civilians and the **responsibility to protect** are two different concepts that must not be confused with one another, there is a clear linkage between them because, when populations

are properly protected, they will not fall victim to genocide, war crimes, crime against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Mr. Mahmood, Counsellor (Bangladesh):

(...) Peacekeeping operations are one of the most important tools available to the United Nations to protect civilians in armed conflict. The Security Council's thematic resolution 1894 (2009), the updated aide-memoire (see S/PRST/2009/1, annex) and the inclusion of protection activities in the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping missions have been important steps forward. However, at the same time, the gap between the words of the protection mandates and their actual implementation persists. In this regard, my delegation would like to re-emphasize the importance of the principle of the **responsibility to protect**, as endorsed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Final Document (resolution 60/1) in preventing harm to civilians in armed conflict.

H.E. Mr. Gutiérrez, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative (Peru):

(Spoke in Spanish)

(...) While such progress is an important starting point, its value is relative if it is not manifested in tangible improvements in the protection of civilians on the ground. We believe it important to continue to strengthen the necessary interaction between the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Security Council. We also believe it essential to fully implement resolutions 1296 (2000) and 1674 (2006), which define the essence of this debate, which is the responsibility of all Member States to protect civilian populations in armed conflict.

Along these lines, we believe it necessary, based on the Secretary-General's report A/63/677 on the implementation of the **responsibility to protect** — which recognizes the principal role of States in protecting their populations from, among others, war crimes — that we continue to focus on pillars one and two: the **responsibility to protect** incumbent on States; and international assistance and capacity-building.

Mr. Valero Briceño, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela):

(Spoke in Spanish): (...) Great world Powers have sought to invoke seemingly noble concepts for political or military interventionist actions that undermine sovereignty. For that reason, the concept of the **responsibility to protect** has not attained the consensus necessary to become an instrument for the protection of civilians in armed conflict. In some cases, certain States may be accused of violating human rights, whereas world Powers may undertake actions leading to coups, territorial splintering and social and economic crises. The fact that a domestic conflict has been created or stimulated from beyond its borders is obfuscated.

Those who create and encourage such crises are the ones who must be condemned and punished. Not infrequently — and history provides plenty of examples — an international intervention ends up supporting those who breach and violate human rights. Foreign interventions thereby undermine the sovereignty of States. At other times, conflict situations are ignored in which it does not suit transnational interests to provide international solidarity, as the State violating human rights acts as the intermediary for those interests. Some Powers brandish rhetoric of humanitarianism and human

rights, but they undermine and distort the true nature of those rights. The case of Iraq is emblematic of that.

In recent decades, we have seen a succession of various concepts and categories that tend towards neocolonial domination. We understand the reasons why many countries of the South would identify with a concept such as the **responsibility to protect**, for instance. We understand their concerns, since international solidarity is essential. But international solidarity is one thing and intervention in order to dominate is another. We must show a common front for solidarity and unite to reject intervention that oppresses peoples. We must reject the concept of the **responsibility to protect**, for it disguises the violation of sovereignty in order to promote neo-colonial interests.

Mr. Seruhere, Minister Plenipotentiary (United Republic of Tanzania):

(...) Across the globe, we have seen violence and mass atrocities against helpless civilians who had hitherto placed all hope and trust for their protection in the United Nations, but in several cases never got it, as was witnessed in the Rwandan genocide of 1994, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995, and in the present Somalia, to mention but a few. In that regard and especially in conflict situations, it is and should be an absolute requirement for all actors and stakeholders — from the State to civil society, from belligerents to humanitarian organizations and from armed personnel to unarmed partisans — to work with the United Nations in the protection of civilians. No one should be allowed to shirk the **responsibility to protect** civilians in armed conflict, but since the United Nations was created and entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, it bears perhaps the greatest responsibility.

Mr. Kohona, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative (Sri Lanka):

(...) There has been mention by several delegations of the relationship between the protection of civilians agenda and the **responsibility to protect**. These are, of course, linked but distinct domains and distinct initiatives, and it is important that they remain so. The protection of civilians is a much broader and wider concept, with wider application, whereas the **responsibility to protect** is very much focused on the four major crimes, and we need to bear those distinctions in mind.