

**GENERAL DEBATES: OPENING OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UN
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
EXCERPTED RtoP STATEMENTS**

**23-25 September and 27-29 September 2010
General Assembly Chamber**

**Armenia
Foreign Minister;
Edward Nalbandian**

(...) While we discuss all avenues to create a more prosperous and protected world for our peoples, it would be remiss if we did not speak about the **responsibility to protect**. As a nation we survived the most heinous crime against humanity - genocide, 95 years ago. We attach utmost importance to the advancement of all international efforts aimed at prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity. It is encouraging that further discussions on the Secretary General's report on "Early warning, assessment and the **responsibility to protect**" are undertaken within the General Assembly to come up with a formula that would allow us to act in a timely and coherent manner with the use of all United Nations system resources and capabilities for early warning, assessment and prevention of such situations that could lead to genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. (...)

**Belgium
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs;
Steven Vanackere**

(...) That's why UN Peacekeeping Missions with strong mandates, especially in the field of protection of civilians are important and should be given the necessary instruments, not the least in the context of the fight against sexual violence. In this context, Belgium strongly supports UN Resolution 1325 and its goals of participation, protection and

promotion of women in peace and security. The concept of sovereignty cannot be used as a justification for human rights violations against citizens of any country. On the contrary, sovereignty implies the "**responsibility to protect**". We support the efforts of the Secretary-General to further put this principle into practice. (...)

**Benin
Special Envoy of the President;
Jean-Marie Ehouzou**

[Unofficial Translation] (...) Benin reiterates its support to the "**Responsibility to Protect**" norm and will make every effort to secure its implementation, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. (...)

**Costa Rica
President;
Laura Chinchilla Miranda**

(...) I propose to empower furthermore the concepts, organisms and instruments for the promotion and protection of human rights. Here lies our interest to participate constructively as members, in the activities of the Human Rights Council. Here also lies our adherence to the main Covenants and Protocols on the matter, our insistence on the **responsibility to protect** civilians and our commitment to human security.

And it offends us that, even nowadays, there are women waiting to be stoned, populations drowned in the barbarism of genocide, and nuclear weapons that are being accumulated while the barns are being depleted. (...)

Denmark
Ambassador and Permanent
Representative to the United Nations;
Carsten Staur

(...) International peace and security rest upon the ability and willingness of states to ensure the protection of its population from human rights violations and atrocity crimes. In this context, I welcome the ongoing debate among member states on the **Responsibility to Protect**. Denmark will take an active part in the further development of this concept which provides the framework for a comprehensive approach. (...)

France
Minister of Foreign and European Affairs;
Bernard Kouchner

[Unofficial translation] (...) Remember our audacity: right here in 1988 with Resolution 43/131, and, two years later, with Resolution 45/100 on "Humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and similar emergency situations". These resolutions made it possible for the first time to guarantee aid workers free access to suffering regions. Remember UNSCR 688 on the situation in Kurdistan of 5 April 1991, which, for the first time, opened the way to a military operation to protect civilians against an oppressor State.

Those were two historic moments that laid the foundations for the right to interfere, which became the **responsibility to protect**, and which this Assembly adopted by consensus at the 2005 world summit. Who could ever have imagined that such a drastic change in international law would be possible?

It has been a long, hard battle, and it's not over yet. Far from it. And to speak frankly, the results are not exactly those I had hoped for. But what we must remember is that

together we overcame obstacles that were supposed to be insurmountable. And there is nothing to stop us from doing the same on issues we collectively decide to take up. (...)

(...) What has become of the **responsibility to protect**? Today, the success of the UN must firstly be judged in the light of its contribution to the protection of civilians. It is above all here that we must be demanding. Massacres and rapes are committed every day throughout the world, in Somalia, Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo, including in regions where peacekeeping forces are deployed. We can no longer be satisfied with counting the victims when massive crimes are committed. Our courage cannot be less than that of those who die as a result of risks that we no longer find it in ourselves to take. (...)

(...) In Guinea, following the massacre in the Conakry stadium on 28 September 2009, we mobilized our efforts to condemn the human rights violations and help the victims of the atrocities perpetrated. The UN Secretary-General dispatched to Guinea an international commission of inquiry one month after the massacre (and I want to officially thank him again), and the ICC prosecutor instituted proceedings. This pressure enabled Guinean civil society on the ground to make a difference. The junta has now written itself out of the picture and a transition government has been put in place. It's not over yet. The second round of voting will take place in a few weeks' time. But I wanted to remind you of this achievement by the UN since at the beginning I started by saying that the **responsibility to protect** was threatened; I think that when we are all in agreement and a movement is taking shape in global civil society, then we can still take action. (...)

Ghana
Minister of Foreign Affairs and
Regional Integration;
Muhammad Mumuni

(...) As agreed by world leaders in 2005, Ghana strongly supports the Principle of the **Responsibility to Protect** as the normative framework to prevent and deter the occurrence of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing which occurred in many countries that were emerging from conflicts. While the fear of its abuse does not take away the intrinsic value of the principle of the **responsibility to protect**, caution must be exercised in order to avoid the abuse of the **responsibility to protect**. This principle is intended not to undermine the sovereignty of States. On the contrary, it is to ensure that sovereign responsibility is exercised in a manner that will prevent a repetition of the mass atrocities that were experienced in places like Rwanda, Srebrenica, Cambodia and Sierra Leone with devastating impact on neighboring countries.

Sadly some of the conflicts linger on today in varying degrees of intensity in many places. The international community must be willing and ready to assist national authorities who will request such assistance with view to developing or enhancing the capacity of countries which are manifestly unable or unwilling to uphold this responsibility to do so. To this end, we welcome the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a **joint office** to coordinate UN system-wide efforts to strengthen early warning mechanisms aimed at ensuring timely and decisive preventive action and or intervention in appropriate cases in accordance with the UN charter. (...)

Guatemala
Ambassador and
Permanent Representative to the
United Nations;
Gert Rosenthal

(...) In rejoining the Human Rights Council, we reiterate our commitment to the full respect of human rights in all their expressions, including the **responsibility to protect** our respective populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We also assign a high importance to other transnational topics which affect us very directly, which would be the case of international migrations and the situation of indigenous peoples. (...)

Holy See
Secretary for Relations with States;
Archbishop Dominique Mamberti

(...) Along these lines the Holy See also believes that progress, although slow, in the discussions on the Principle of the **Responsibility to Protect** is reason for hope. (...)

Malta
Deputy Prime Minister;
Tonio Borg

(...) We note the progress, albeit small but most welcome, on the discussion on the **Responsibility to Protect**. It will be recalled that five years ago the World Summit Outcome called for an expansion of the UN capabilities for early warning and assessment of possible genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, besides supporting the establishment of an early warning capability. Malta therefore highly commends the **interactive dialogue** which took place last July and commends the initiative of the Secretary-General to set up a UN **Joint Office** to deal with the prevention of genocide and the wider range of crimes

and violations covered by the **responsibility to protect**. (...)

early warning capability within the Secretariat. (...)

**New Zealand
Minister of Foreign Affairs;
Murray McCully**

(...) Never before has this organization deployed so many missions to such complex environments. This expansion has opened up the discussion of the way the UN conducts its peacekeeping operations. Clear and achievable mandates are needed, progress needs to be better monitored, and efficiency needs to be improved. We are also contributing to UN efforts to strengthen peacebuilding in practice, including the need for better participation of women in peacebuilding. Of course the United Nations' response to crises has not always been successful. It is for this reason that New Zealand has strongly supported the **Responsibility to Protect**. We were pleased to contribute to the joint Genocide/**R2P office**, and look forward to more comprehensive implementation of **R2P** throughout the UN system.

One of the clearest examples of New Zealand's commitment to principles of collective responsibility through the United Nations is Timor-Leste. (...)

**Sweden
Ambassador to the United Nations;
Marten Grunditz**

(...) The international community has agreed on the **responsibility to protect** populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We need to intensify our efforts and develop the right tools to ensure the full realization of the **responsibility to protect** both as sovereign states and as part of the international community. Sweden fully supports the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the