

Excerpts of Government Statements on the Responsibility to Protect Europe 2005-2007

| Country | Speaker | Excerpt |
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| Austria (on behalf of the EU) | Ambassador Gerhard Pfanzelter | <p>At the World Summit 2005 our Heads of State and Government underlined that the protection of civilians in armed conflict is a concern of the international community. A number of important decisions and commitments have been taken. Most important was the historic agreement on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, which has been reaffirmed by SC Resolution 1674.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> |
| Belgium | Ambassador Johan Verbeke | <p>I would like to refer to the principle of the responsibility to protect, which was enshrined during the 2005 Summit and which has since been taken up in numerous resolutions. Belgium is fully aware that the operationalization of that principle will require in-depth and prudent reflection. We nonetheless believe that the principle will henceforth be part of the conceptual <i>acquis</i> of the work of the Security Council.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Meeting on Threats to International Peace and Security, New York, 8 January 2007)</i></p> |
| | Ambassador Johan Verbeke | <p>Belgium would also like to emphasize that it is above all States themselves that must assume the responsibility to protect civilians in situations of armed conflict. If they do not have the capacity or the will to guarantee adequate protection, then the international community has the responsibility - and even the duty - to respond.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 22 June 2007)</i></p> |

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| | <p>Minister for Foreign Affairs Karel De Gucht</p> | <p>Our attention for crisis management and peace consolidation must not diminish the importance of preventive diplomacy. I welcome the initiatives of the Secretary-General in this matter such as the improvement of the meditation capacities of the UN and the upgrading of the mandates concerning the prevention of genocides and mass atrocities, as well as the responsibility to protect. It is also necessary to make this concept more operational.</p> <p><i>(Open Debates at the Opening of the 62nd General Assembly Session, New York, 25 September – 3 October 2007)</i></p> |
| <p>Croatia</p> | <p>Ambassador Neven Jurica</p> | <p>The international community should encourage and help States to exercise their responsibility to protect their populations against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The international community has already expressed its readiness to take collective action through the Security Council when national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from the above-mentioned violations of humanitarian law. We should not be seen wanting in the implementation of our commitments.</p> <p>Even in the case of natural disasters, civilians deserve protection.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 27 May 2008)</i></p> |
| <p>Cyprus</p> | <p>President Tassos Papadopoulos</p> | <p>We also believe that the UN and the world community have an obligation and a responsibility to protect innocent populations against awful violations of human rights, such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> |
| <p>Denmark</p> | <p>Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj</p> | <p>The 2005 World Summit Outcome underlined that each individual state has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This is not an obligation to be taken lightly.</p> <p>Unfortunately, recent history demonstrates that national authorities sometimes are either unwilling or unable to provide the required protection. (...)</p> <p>One of the keystones in the fulfillment of the purposes of the United Nations is for the international community to take appropriate action to protect civilian populations. The UN Charter provides a clear framework for our response. We have a responsibility to use all peaceful means to provide sufficient protection. But if these means fail, it is our</p> |

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| | <p>Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj</p> | <p>responsibility to use all necessary and available means - including collective action in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter - to put an end to ongoing acts of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It is not just something we can consider doing - it is something we must do.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 9 November 2005)</i></p> <p>Every state and the international community as a whole have a responsibility to protect our fellow human beings in particular during armed conflicts. We all confirmed this at the 2005 World Summit. Unfortunately, this is a responsibility we have not always honoured. We need to do more.</p> <p>If states are unable or unwilling to provide protection for all - including children, women and representatives of the free press - the international community must react to stop the pattern of violence -local authorities clearly have an obligation to provide their full cooperation to facilitate these efforts. Physical protection, the restoration of law and order and the fight against impunity must be key priorities for bringing the violence to an end.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> |
| | <p>Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller</p> | <p>It is a cause for concern that we have witnessed the resurgence of the notion of respect for national sovereignty as a justification for inaction and paralysis in international affairs. There is of course no denying that nation states remain the constituent part of the international system and of this very organisation. But respect for sovereignty can never become an excuse for accepting massive human rights violations. That was the key message from the Summit last year, when Heads of State pronounced their support for the notion of Responsibility to Protect.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj</p> | <p>Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Unfortunately, in some cases, States manifestly fail to provide the necessary protection - or the perpetrator is the State itself. In situations in which a State embarks on waging war against its own population, the responsibility to protect the civilians affected becomes that of the international community. We have a moral and political obligation not to turn our backs on the many civilians who suffer from attacks carried out by, or with the consent of, their own Governments.</p> |

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| | <p>Ambassador Carsten Staur</p> | <p>Whether or not the concept of the responsibility to protect needs further consideration is, as such, irrelevant. Given the lack of action and engagement elsewhere, the basic political commitment not to allow another Rwanda or Srebrenica is the responsibility of all of us, including the Security Council, as well as of other United Nations bodies.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Second Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 4 December 2006)</i></p> <p>At the Millennium Summit in 2000 an unprecedented number of world leaders came together and committed themselves to an ambitious global agenda for the years ahead. An agenda that was further reinforced at the 2005 World Summit, where we also adopted the far reaching principle of the Responsibility to Protect.</p> <p><i>(Open Debates at the Opening of the 62nd General Assembly Session, New York, 25 September – 3 October 2007)</i></p> |
| <p>Finland</p> | <p>Ambassador Kirsti Lintonen</p> | <p>At the 2005 World Summit, the heads of State and Government recognized that the protection of civilians in armed conflict is a key concern of the international community. The European Union reiterates its support for the historic Summit Outcome conclusion that each individual State has the responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity – a conclusion which was reaffirmed by resolution 1674 (2006).</p> <p>The best way to protect civilians in armed conflicts is to prevent conflicts. The EU is pleased to note the strengthening of the culture of prevention across the United Nations and vigorously supports the continuation of this trend. The Security Council plays an important role in this regard. Timely and adequate briefings by the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and other relevant actors will help the Council to act sufficiently early on in conflict situations to effectively protect civilians at risk.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Second Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 4 December 2006)</i></p> |

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| France | Ambassador Jean-Marc De La Sablière President Jacques Chirac Ambassador Jean-Marc De La Sablière | <p>Two months ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1674 on the protection of civilians, which endorses in particular the responsibility to protect. I applaud the perseverance of the United Kingdom in presenting and bringing this project to fruition, with France's full support. It is now time to examine how to implement this new roadmap for the protection of civilians.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> <p>To build peace means fighting terrorism. Means preventing proliferation. Means shouldering the "responsibility to protect" that we enshrined here last year.</p> <p>(...) Given the seriousness of what is at stake, the international community must stand firm and united. We do not aim to call regimes into question. We aim to ensure security in accordance with international law and with due regard for the sovereignty of all countries.</p> <p>The "Responsibility to Protect" - that was what we affirmed.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> <p>I must stress that the responsibility to protect civilian populations falls first and foremost to the Governments concerned. Wherever populations are threatened, Governments must fully assume their responsibilities to protect them. The international community must ensure above all that they do not shirk those responsibilities. Regional organizations and the United Nations must encourage them and, if necessary, assume their own responsibilities. In a number of situations, such as in Darfur, the United Nations and regional organizations must work closely with one another.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Second Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 4 December 2006)</i></p> |
| Germany, (on behalf of the European Union and associated States) | Ambassador Michael Von Ungern-Sternberg | <p>At the 2005 World Summit the Heads of States established the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The EU welcomes the reaffirmation of the responsibility to protect by the Security Council in subsequent resolutions, including resolution 1674.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 22 June 2007)</i></p> |

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| <p>Greece</p> | <p>Ambassador Adamantios Vassilakis</p> | <p>The early prevention of atrocities against civilians is an obligation of the State concerned. If however, this State is unwilling or unable to protect its civilians from such crimes, we believe that the Security Council has the political and moral obligation to take effective action and alleviate the human suffering. In this respect we would like to underline the importance of the relevant paragraphs of the World Summit Outcome Document concerning the responsibility of the international community to protect populations from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing. The draft resolution should reflect these developments.</p> <p>In this respect we want to emphasize the importance of early warning mechanisms in preventing the commission of such crimes. In this respect the Special Adviser of the Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide, the High Commissioner for Human Rights or other UN offices, can play an important role by providing the Security Council with objective and reliable information in this respect.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 9 December 2005)</i></p> |
| <p>Iceland</p> | <p>Prime Minister Halldór Asgrímsson</p> | <p>In particular, we have established the concept of the responsibility to protect. This idea is implicit in the UN Charter. It is therefore right that this summit underlines the responsibility that governments have to their people – and the duty of the international community to intervene in a timely and decisive manner if national authorities manifestly fail in their responsibilities.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> |
| <p>Ireland</p> | <p>Head of Cabinet Bertie Ahern</p> <p>Minister for Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern</p> | <p>We are all sovereign states, with sovereign rights and responsibilities. But when these responsibilities are not exercised to protect citizens from gross abuses or genocide, others must assume them through the UN, including, if all else fails, by military force.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> <p>The World Summit defined the international community’s responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, should national authorities fail to do so. It would be a disgrace if this major advance became an exercise in empty rhetoric. (...) We cannot indefinitely stand by and watch with horror from the sidelines.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |

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| Italy | Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi | <p>The affirmation of the "responsibility to protect" principle is a major result that responds to the shortcomings of recent years.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> |
| | Ambassador Marcello Spatafora | <p>Resolution 1674 (2006) marked a milestone in the work of the Security Council, affirming the responsibility of States to protect civilians in armed conflict, in line with the principles of international humanitarian law. We welcome the progress and positive achievements made in this field, which is at the core of United Nations activity in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and rapid response in times of crisis. We now have to focus on how to ensure the steady implementation of resolution 1674 (2006) — to move from words to deeds. (...)</p> <p>The protection of civilians is not an abstract political or legal concept. It is, of course, understood - as recalled by Under-Secretary General Holmes and by many other previous speakers- that what is at stake here is the seriousness and credibility of our commitment to the responsibility to protect.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 22 June 2007)</i></p> |
| | Ambassador Aldo Mantovani | <p>The Council's action to implement resolution 1625 (2005) should be built on the recognition that the primary responsibility for conflict prevention resides with Member States. (...) The Council should encourage and support the efforts of national actors. (...) Second, conflict prevention should be a collective effort of the whole United Nations system.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Maintenance of Peace and Security in Africa, New York, 28 August 2007)</i></p> |
| | Ambassador Marcello Spatafora | <p>First of all, resolution 1674 (2006) reaffirms the principle of the responsibility to protect, a "cardinal achievement" (<i>S/2007/643, para. 11</i>) of our Organization and one that must be read and operationalized in a non-confrontational manner. (...) We must never lose sight of the fact that what matters most at the end of the day is if and how we are able to deliver and have an impact on the ground in bringing relief to those who suffer.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 27 May 2008)</i></p> |

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| <p>Liechtenstein</p> | <p>Prime Minister Otmar Halser</p> | <p>On the conceptual side, we are particularly pleased that the Summit recognizes the responsibility of the international community to protect civilian populations when governments fail to do so.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Christian Wenaweser</p> | <p>The recognition of the responsibility of the international community to protect civilian populations when their governments fail to do so constitutes a major breakthrough in our common endeavor to prevent genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The main obligation for its implementation naturally falls on the Security Council. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide can play an important role in this respect. The Council has to ensure that disgraceful inaction such as in the case of the genocide in Rwanda cannot occur anymore. This responsibility leads almost inevitably to the conclusion that collective action to prevent and respond to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes must not be made impossible by a non-concurring vote of one of the Permanent Members of the Council. (...) The rest of the membership also has a responsibility in this respect in that they can bring situations to the attention of the Security Council, in open debates and through other means.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 9 December 2005)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Christian Wenaweser</p> | <p>We wish to take this opportunity to commend the Council for having produced a text that contains many crucial elements for the further improvement of the international protection regime for civilians in armed conflict. The recognition that the deliberate targeting of civilians and other protected persons, and the commission of systematic, flagrant and widespread violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in armed conflict may constitute a threat to international peace and security is very welcome. We would, however, have expected that the resolution more specifically spells out the role that the Council is willing to assume with regard to the implementation of the responsibility of the international community to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> |

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| | <p>Minister for Foreign Affairs Rita Kieber-Beck</p> | <p>The recognition of the responsibility to protect constituted such an advance, indeed a real milestone in the Outcome Document. Today, we must note that the international community has not followed up its commitment made at the World Summit with concrete action. The situation in Darfur, irrespective of the definition of the crimes in question, clearly falls under the scope of the responsibility to protect, and yet we still have to see the action necessary in accordance with our common commitment to protect civilian populations.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Patrick Ritter</p> | <p>The formal recognition, in the World Summit Outcome, of the responsibility of the international community to protect civilian populations when their governments fail to do so constitutes a major breakthrough in our common endeavor to prevent genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.</p> <p>The main obligation for its implementation naturally falls on the Security Council. Diplomatic means such as targeted sanctions and embargoes, used in an effective way, should be employed at an early stage where violations against civilians prevail, to signal to concern of the international community and to serve as a first step to protect. Collective action to prevent and respond to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes must not be made impossible by a non-concurring vote of one of the Permanent Members of the Council. (...)</p> <p>The rest of the UN membership also has a role to play in making the responsibility to protect operational, in that they can bring situations to the attention of the Security Council, in open debates and through other means such as consideration in the General Assembly.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 22 June 2007)</i></p> |
| | <p>Minister for Foreign Affairs Rita Kieber-Beck</p> | <p>Our record in the area of reform, two years after the 2005 World Summit, is mixed: we yet have to achieve certain institutional reforms and the principle of the responsibility to protect must yet be translated into concrete action.</p> <p><i>(Open Debates at the Opening of the 62nd General Assembly Session, New York, 25 September – 3 October 2007)</i></p> |

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| | Ambassador Christian Wenaweser | <p>The consensus decision at the 2005 World Summit to accept the concept of the responsibility to protect was of historic magnitude, but it has not yet led to a paradigm shift in the protection of civilians. We believe that it is time to operationalize this concept and that the relevant discussions must be carried out with the necessary conceptual clarity. The responsibility to protect, as defined in the Summit Outcome Document (General Assembly resolution 60/1), is not as such linked to armed conflicts, but to the crimes listed in the Outcome Document: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Some of those crimes do not necessarily occur in situations of armed conflict and therefore do not require a connection to armed conflict. The responsibility to protect concept is thus highly relevant to the discussion we are having today, but protection-relevant situations also occur outside of armed conflicts.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 27 May 2008)</i></p> |
| Lithuania | President Valdas Adamkus | <p>Responsibility to protect is also about hope. Responsibility to protect is our joint commitment to an individual's right to life. And a promise that he or she will not fall victim to genocide, war crimes or ethnic cleansing while the rest of the world goes about business as usual.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> |
| | President Valdas Adamkus | <p>Three years have passed since the adoption of the World Summit Outcome Document, which elaborated on the concept of the Responsibility to Protect, and yet we have been too slow to respond to massive violations of human rights and mass atrocities. The principle of the Responsibility to Protect can no longer be confined to paper. We are therefore encouraging the Secretary-General to follow up on the World Summit Outcome Document and take measures to operationalise this principle.</p> <p><i>(Open Debates at the Opening of the 62nd General Assembly Session, New York, 25 September – 3 October 2007)</i></p> |
| Monaco | Sovereign Prince Albert II | <p>Faced with genocides, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, we must adopt the "Responsibility to protect" principle as a basis for collective action. I can only endorse the often expressed sentiment that it is the international community's duty to act to protect people in danger when that responsibility is not assumed by the State concerned or by the regional organization to which it belongs.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> |

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| Slovakia | <p>Ambassador Peter Burian</p> | <p>The establishment of a culture of protection, which Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for a few years ago, is becoming a reality and the implementation of the principle "Responsibility to Protect" outlined during the World Summit this September into the international legal system is without doubts a major step forward. Further elaboration of the principle "Responsibility to Protect" and its bringing into life should continue also through a new UNSC resolution on protection of civilians.</p> <p>(...) The UNSC, as the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has a special role in addressing the issue and in strengthening the response capabilities of the international community. It must ensure immediate, decisive and rapid reaction to emerging situations of massive attacks on civilians and their livelihood. Political questions or selfish national interests should not be an obstacle for the international community to act through the UNSC, including through the application of the principle "R2P", especially in situations when governmental institutions are unable or unwilling to implement feasible measures for protection of civilians.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 9 December 2005)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Peter Burian</p> | <p>The adoption of the latest resolution on the protection of civilians in the armed conflicts (resolution 1674 (2006)), following the Report of the Secretary-General of 28 November 2005, has not only shown the urgency of the problem, but while reaffirming the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, it has also identified measures and actions the Security Council might take in order to make the response to needs of civilians in armed conflicts more effective.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> |
| | <p>Prime Minister Robert Fico</p> | <p>The concept of "responsibility to protect" adopted at last year's World Summit applies to all Member States and to all governments. When peaceful means prove inadequate and national authorities are failing to protect their own citizens, the international community has the responsibility to act collectively through the Security Council and prevent another Rwanda or Srebrenica. It is our shared responsibility to protect tens of thousands suffering in Darfur.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |

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| | <p>Ambassador Peter Burian</p> | <p>We must do everything to prevent another Rwanda or Srebrenica from happening again. In that regard, we fully endorse the concept of responsibility to protect adopted by our heads of State and Government in September 2005. Furthermore, we hope to be able to rely on receiving more regular and more analytical reports from the Security-General on regions of potential armed conflict. The good offices of the Secretary-General will certainly continue to be an indispensable tool.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Meeting on Threats to International Peace and Security, New York, 8 January 2007)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Peter Burian</p> | <p>It is clear that despite the existing legal framework for the protection of civilians in armed conflict, which was further strengthened last year by the adoption of resolution 1674 (2006), serious gaps remain in the practical implementation of agreed norms and principles, including the responsibility to protect. We welcome and support the intention of the Secretary-General to initiate a discussion among United Nations Members on how to translate that core principle of humanity and human solidarity, which our leaders endorsed at the 2005 World Summit, into concrete action on a global, regional and national level.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 22 June 2007)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Dusan Matulay</p> | <p>The 2005 World Summit codified the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility lies with each individual State and entails the prevention of such crimes through appropriate and necessary means.</p> <p>(...) The responsibility to protect also implies that, when national capacities and the ability to face extensive potential threats are inadequate, the responsibility to identify possible risks and ask for the assistance of the United Nations and the international community lies primarily with the national authorities.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Maintenance of Peace and Security in Africa, New York, 28 August 2007)</i></p> |

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| Slovenia | Ambassador Roman Kirn | <p>We would like to underline the fact that the responsibility to protect is a continuum that ranges from prevention to protection and rebuilding. In this regard, we welcome the Council’s emphasis on prevention and the need for a comprehensive approach involving the promotion of economic growth, poverty eradication, sustainable development, national reconciliation, good governance, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for and protection of human rights. With regard to the challenge of rebuilding, we welcome the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which met for the first time last week, and the role it can play in facilitating the transition from relief to development towards sustainable peace.</p> <p>As members of the Human Security Network, we fully support the mandate of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide. His work and cooperation with the various actors involved on the ground is important for collecting early and solid data that can better inform our preventive efforts as well as provide the basis for bringing relevant situations to the attention of the Security Council.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> |
| | Minister for Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel | <p>In the UN, we should continue to review the concept of sovereignty. Many fear that the erosion of sovereignty provides grounds for interfering in state internal affairs. Indeed, the potential for misuse is real. (...) At the same time, the sovereignty of states must be understood in the context of contemporary reality. National borders are no longer an excuse for the international community to turn a blind eye to genocide, crimes against humanity and other gross human rights violations.</p> <p>Last year, world leaders for the first time formally and universally affirmed the concept of the Responsibility to Protect. The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document provides a detailed framework for this individual and collective responsibility, ranging from prevention and protection to rebuilding. We regard this as a conceptual breakthrough and wish to stress the need for all members of the international community, and the Security Council in particular, to deliver on the implementation of this responsibility in practice.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |

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| | <p>Ambassador Sanja Štiglic (on behalf of the EU)</p> | <p>The European Union commends the steps taken to strengthen the normative framework for the protection of civilians. In particular, we have welcomed the endorsement by heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit of the responsibility of each State to protect its population from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. That recognizes the primary responsibility of States for protecting their own populations, but also underscores the shared responsibility of the international community to help in that regard.</p> <p>We also welcomed resolution 1674 (2006), which reaffirmed the responsibility of the international community to protect civilians from those appalling crimes when national authorities manifestly fail to protect them. That was truly a decision of historic magnitude, but it has not yet led to a sea change in the protection of civilians worldwide. The European Union emphasizes the need for further consideration by the Security Council of the responsibility to protect, as well as by the General Assembly, in order to find a practical approach to its implementation.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 27 May 2008)</i></p> |
| Sweden | <p>Prime Minister Göran Persson</p> <p>Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds</p> | <p>It [outcome document] demonstrates that peace and security, development, and human rights form part of one single entity. It reminds us that we will not succeed in one area if we ignore the others. It affirms important principles, such as our collective responsibility to protect our populations from genocide and ethnic cleansing.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> <p>The agreement reached on the responsibility to protect is one of the most important achievements of the UN Summit in September last year.</p> <p>(...) The concept of responsibility to protect could actually change the terms of international politics.</p> <p>It turns the concept of sovereignty on its head: sovereignty is still a basis for international relations, but sovereignty is not only a bundle of rights, it includes a set of obligations, a responsibility.</p> <p>An even more radical implication of the concept is that states now also have the responsibility to protect the population of other states.</p> <p><i>(Seminar "Prevention in Practice" with UN Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide Juan Méndez, Stockholm, 17 March 2006)</i></p> |

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| | Ambassador Anders Liden | <p>We need to live up to the principle of responsibility to protect that we accepted at last year's Summit. The Security Council must show the will to act when civilian populations are threatened by the most serious crimes.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |
| Switzerland | <p>President Samuel Schmid</p> <p>Ambassador Peter Maurer</p> | <p>There is also the need for us to better assume, individually as collectively, our responsibility to protect, and to make every effort to define, together, the criteria for its implementation.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> <p>Unfortunately, in spite of the efforts of the international community, the protection of civilians in armed conflicts still remains a burning issue. (...)</p> <p>(...) We welcome the references made to the responsibility to protect contained in the draft resolution under review [, i.e. the Manual on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups].</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 9 December 2005)</i></p> |
| United Kingdom | <p>Prime Minister Tony Blair</p> <p>Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry</p> | <p>For the first time at this Summit we agree that states do not have the right to do what they will within their own borders, but that we, in the name of humanity, have a common duty to protect people where their own government will not.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> <p>Efforts to protect civilians from the effect of armed conflict must be at the heart of our work in this Council. How many people noticed the number of occasions when Mr. Egeland said "must", "we have to", "we should"? The sense of imperative implicit in the scale of the challenge that we confront and in the urgency of action is all too obvious. He listed some of the more obvious blights on human security which exist in the world. That is why the Council reaffirmed in resolution 1674 (2006) that we have a shared responsibility to protect populations from large scale abuses and, in particular, from crimes against humanity, including the prospect of genocide. That is why today's debate is an important opportunity to try to demonstrate how we can do better at implementing that key resolution.</p> |

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| | | <p>(...) Preventing the occurrence of armed conflict should always be a prime consideration for the Council. That was recognized in the outcome document of the Summit last September, where we stressed the obligation of the United Nations to play its part and the primary responsibility of States to protect their own citizens. The Security Council has a role in endorsing and supporting that approach, which is set out in resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1653 (2006), as well as resolution 1674 (2006). That activity needs to be underpinned by a clear analysis and identification of flashpoints for potential conflict at an early stage.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p> |
| | <p>Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Margaret Beckett</p> | <p>Collectively we have a responsibility to protect human life and a duty to defend the international institutions that help us as a community to achieve that goal. The answers do not lie in division or in personal attacks but in the earnest and consistent pursuit of justice and peace.</p> <p><i>(61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate, New York, September 2006)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador Karen Pierce</p> | <p>While national Governments have the primary responsibility to protect their citizens, the international community also has responsibilities. We should live up to them.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 22 June 2007)</i></p> |
| | <p>Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs David Miliband</p> | <p>We need also to improve our capacity to prevent the emergence of conflict. That is our vision of the Responsibility to Protect.</p> <p><i>(Open Debates at the Opening of the 62nd General Assembly Session, New York, 25 September – 3 October 2007)</i></p> |
| | <p>Ambassador John Sawers</p> | <p>As well as protecting civilians in situations of armed conflict, the international community has committed itself to assist States that are under stress before crises and conflicts break out. In that regard, we reaffirm our support for the concept of the responsibility to protect, as agreed by Member States at the World Summit in 2005. It is an important commitment, which should result in earlier and more decisive action to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.</p> <p><i>(United Nations Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, New York, 27 May 2008)</i></p> |