

## Government statements on the Responsibility to Protect Africa Region 2005-2008

Country	Speaker	Excerpt
Benin	Ambassador Jean-Marie Ehouzou	Conflict prevention is an essential aspect of the Security Council's mandate emanating from Chapter VI of the Charter and, more specifically, its Article 34. The Council has made considerable efforts to meet the challenges identified. Its various initiatives are based on the 10 principles of conflict prevention set out in the Secretary-General's first report on the subject (S/2001/574), dated 7 June 2001, to which are added the recently defined criteria for the exercise by the international community of the <b>responsibility to protect</b> .
		() It is clear that the United Nations system in conducting peacekeeping operations has, until recently, operated with marginal involvement by regional organizations. The time has come to make the necessary changes in order to make it possible for the organizations to fully play their role in the collective security system established by the Charter - both in terms of the doctrine of peace operations and in the allocation of related resources.
		(Security Council Open Debate on Maintenance of Peace and Security in Africa, UN Security Council, 28 August 2007)
Botswana	President Festus G. Mogae	Guaranteeing the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms is one aspect of the UN's broader mandate to protect our populations. We can no longer afford to stand back if a country fails to protect its citizens against grave human [r]ight abuses. In this respect, we embrace to concept of "responsibility to protect."
		(World Summit General Assembly, 60 <sup>th</sup> Session, 14-16 September 2005)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ambassador Itoua Apoyolo	I cannot conclude without recalling the idea of the <b>responsibility to protect</b> , which was set out at the September 2005 World Summit. We strongly support that idea, for it is up to the parties to a conflict to guarantee access for humanitarian personnel to populations in need. My delegation also believes that the creation of a safe environment for people and groups at risk must continue to be a fundamental objective of peacekeeping operations. We also remain convinced that the best protection is to be found in strict respect for international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions and international human rights and criminal law.
		(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)

	Ambassador Pascal Gayama	The principle of <b>responsibility and the duty to protect</b> were highlighted during the 2005 Summit, when the international community took on the obligation to protect people from the crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
		(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)
Ghana	Leslie Kojo Christian, Permanent Representative of Ghana	The Security Council has since its consideration of the tragic plight of civilians trapped in armed conflict, worked assiduously to counter such gross violations as genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, as well as sexual exploitation and abuse. Indeed, the adoption of resolutions 1265, 1296 and 1674 demonstrates the Council's determination to take appropriate measures against this menace.
		It has generally been recognized, and rightly so, that the primary <b>responsibility for the protection</b> of civilians in armed conflict rests with their governments. By the tenets of international humanitarian law and resolutions of the Security Council, this responsibility has also been extended to non-state actors, especially belligerent groups involved in the conflicts.
		() Based on my government's firm conviction on human rights, we hold the view that in the event of the failure by both governments and armed groups to abide by their commitments under international humanitarian law, conventions and agreements, it behooves the United Nations to intervene and protect innocent populations against such crimes as genocide, ethnic cleansing and other gross human rights violations.
		(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)
	Mr. Robert Tachie- Menson, Minister to the Permanent Mission to the UN	It is clear that the primary <b>responsibility for the protection of civilians</b> lies with States and Governments. That fact was recognized in General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 1991. The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document also affirmed that principle in its paragraphs 138 and 139, which emphasize the responsibility of the United Nations to use appropriate diplomatic and other peaceful means to protect populations at risk, and, failing that, to take collective action under Chapters VI and VII of the Charter to protect civilian populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. That was also stressed by resolution 1674 (2006).
		It is therefore undeniable that the international community has the legal and institutional tools to deal with this issue. The challenge for us now is how to translate the mechanisms at our disposal into effective practical systems for the protection of civilians. When States and combatants prove unwilling or unable to act, the international community has a moral and legal duty to intervene to avert a humanitarian catastrophe.
		(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)

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Lesotho	Deputy Prime Minister Archibald Lesao Lehohla	We must, recall that, in the year 2005, this Assembly solemnly proclaimed the role of the entire international community, acting through the United Nations to protect populations from genocide, war crimes and other crimes against humanity. Unfortunately this is not what is happening on the ground. We still notice inaction on the part of the Security Council, or its reaction coming too late!! The harrowing experience of Rwanda and now Darfur are living testimony to this.  (Open Debates at the Opening of the 62nd General Assembly Session, UN General Assembly, 25 September – 03 October 2007)
Mauritius	Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam	Mauritius equally endorses the principle of "Responsibility to Protect" as a norm of collective action in cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.  (World Summit General Assembly, 60 <sup>th</sup> Session, 14-16 September 2005)
Nigeria	Ambassador Aminu B. Wali	We believe that the time has come for the international community to reexamine when it is its <b>responsibility to protect</b> civilians, without prejudice to the sovereignty of Member States. The genocide in Rwanda, the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and the crimes committed against unarmed civilians in areas of conflict, especially in Africa serves as a constant reminder that we have to search for a generally acceptable understanding when the international community exercises its responsibility to protect.
		(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)
	Ambassador Felix Aniokoye	More than ever, the challenges of protecting civilians in armed conflicts have expanded and become more daunting. My delegation therefore believes that the time has come for the international community to reexamine when it is its responsibility to protect, without prejudice to the sovereignty of Member States. Genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes committed against unarmed civilians in situations of conflict are grim reminders that the time is right for the international community to determine when to exercise its responsibility to protect.
		(Security Council Fourth Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 20 November 2007)

## Rwanda **President Paul** Let me also stress the importance of our collective responsibility to Kagame deal with terrorism, and to protect populations under threat of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Never again should the international community's response to these crimes be found wanting. Let us resolve to take collective actions in a timely and decisive manner. Let us also commit to put in place early warning mechanisms and ensure that preventive interventions are the rule rather and the exception. (World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005) **Ambassador** The most serious crimes in situations of conflict are committed against Joseph poor, defenceless and voiceless people, often living in remote locations Nsengimana far from the sight of the international community and the media. It is for such people that the implementation of resolutions 1674 (2006) and 1738 (2006) is most urgent. Despite these resolutions, and despite the endorsement by all States at the 2005 World Summit of the principles of the "responsibility to protect", which my Government strongly supports, too many people continue to suffer unspeakable horrors in situations of armed conflict. It is clear that much more needs to be done, particularly by this Security Council, which is the Chartermandated body responsible for international peace and security. We believe that our common humanity should unite us in the resolve to put an end to the suffering of millions of people who live in, and are threatened by, situations of conflict. This resolve entails national Governments taking full responsibility to protect civilians, and, where they are unable or unwilling to do so, the international community acting through the Security Council to take appropriate steps to provide such protection. It is essential that, in taking such actions, the Security Council be seen as consistent and just, acting in the best interests of the international community, and that it show special concern for those who are most defenceless and vulnerable and most in need of protection from the international community. It was, after all, to protect such defenceless people that, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, the United Nations and its Security Council were established. (Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)

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South Africa	Mr. Xolisa Mabhongo Charge d'Affairs	The international community agreed during the 2005 World Summit that each individual State has the <b>responsibility for the protection</b> of its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It was also agreed that, where appropriate, Member States would be helped to build the necessary capacity to enable them to fulfil their protection mandate. It is from this perspective that we welcome the report by the Secretary-General and this open debate in the Security Council. We wish to emphasise, however, that the 2005 World Summit also called for continued consideration of the issue of the <b>responsibility to protect</b> populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity within the United Nations General Assembly.  (Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians, 9
Tanzania	Ms Regum Tai	December 2005) We command the Security Council for adopting resolution 1674(2006)
Tanzania	Ms. Begum Taj Minister Plenipotentiary of the Perm. Mission at the UN	We commend the Security Council for adopting resolution 1674(2006) of April 28, 2006 in line with the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. The resolution stresses the protection and assistance needs of all affected civilian population and reaffirms the provisions of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the Outcome Document regarding the <b>responsibility to protect</b> populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
		Worth stressing is the fact that appropriate measures in protecting civilians threatened by armed conflicts should go beyond statements of intent or expressions of concern. Meaningful and practical protection should be based on appropriate and effective actions. In this context, we urge Member States and international organizations, armed groups, the private sector and other non-state actors, to live up to their responsibilities and continue to display their necessary commitment to ensure decisive and rapid actions to move the war-tone societies from vulnerability to security and from war to peace.
		(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)
	Ambassador Mahiga	Enhancing the protection of civilians in armed conflict is a fundamental responsibility of States and of the international community; we cannot afford to fail in that respect. () Such insecurity is due to the presence or activities of armed groups and militias within and around camps and settlements. Governments need to be reminded of their <b>obligation to provide protection</b> .()
		The greatest challenge to the Council and to the international community as a whole occurs when Governments not only <b>fail to protect</b> their citizens but are themselves the cause of insecurity to their citizens. How can we exercise our collective <b>responsibility to protect</b> under such circumstances? We should hold such Governments responsible and accountable for their actions.
		(Security Council 2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 4 December 2006)

Zimbabwe	President R.G. Mugabe	The vision that we must present for a future United Nations should not be one filled with vague concepts that provide an opportunity for those states that seek to interfere in the internal affairs of other states. Concepts such as "humanitarian intervention" and the "responsibility to protect" need careful scrutiny in order to test the motives of their proponents.
		(World Summit General Assembly, 60 <sup>th</sup> Session, September 2005)