

Government statements on the Responsibility to Protect Latin-America Region 2005-2007

Country	Speaker	Excerpt
Argentina	Ambassador García Moritán	<p>On the one hand the Outcome document of the 2005 Summit consolidated the rich debate of the previous years through the adoption of the concept of responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crime, ethnic cleansing and crime against humanity. In this document our leaders indicated that they are ready to take collective action in a timely and decisive fashion through this Council against these grave situations. The second significant development on the issue was given by the approval by unanimity of resolution 1674 on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts by the Council, completing and updating the legal framework that was established by resolutions 1265 and 1296.(...)</p> <p>(...) Both elements, the responsibility to protect and the new resolution of the Council on the protection of civilians are the start of a new phase regarding the actions to be taken by the international community in this subject.</p> <p>(...)In the case of the protection for civilians, the consideration of a mechanism of this nature could also mean an initial step regarding the implementation of the final part of paragraph 138 of the Outcome Document of the 2005 Summit that indicates that the international community must support the United Nations to establish an early warning capability regarding the responsibility to protect.</p> <p><i>(Security Council First Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 28 June 2006)</i></p>
	Ambassador Jorge Argüello	<p>The situation described by the Emergency Relief Coordinator [in Darfur] clearly shows the persistence of atrocities committed against civilians in a scale that goes beyond the statistical point of the increase or decrease of certain categories of violence or attacks. My delegation strongly condemns those attacks and would like to reiterate that no national security consideration can prevail over the primary obligation of all States and parties to a conflict to fulfill the rules of international humanitarian law, contained in the Hague Conventions and the Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols.</p>

		<p>The Security Council has substantially contributed to the international regime of protection of civilians through its resolutions 1265, 1296 and 1674. At the same time, the Council has been given a clear mandate by the General Assembly to take collective action in a timely and decisive fashion to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.</p> <p><i>(Security Council Second Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 04 December 2006)</i></p> <p>As the predecessor of Mr. Holmes pointed out, the responsibility to protect civilians in conflict is a central principle of humanity that must be depoliticized and transformed into joint action of Security Council members and international organizations. The persistence of atrocities against civilians that is evident through regular evaluations of the Council makes it necessary to reflect on the possibility that in certain conflicts such measures be taken that are currently foreseen for situations where the states that are involved in a conflict do not have the political will or capability to adopt effective actions to protect civilians affected by this crisis. There is no consideration of national security that could prevail over the obligation of states and other parties in conflict to comply with humanitarian law. (...)</p> <p><i>(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)</i></p>
Columbia	Ambassador Claudia Blum	<p>In keeping with the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international humanitarian law, Governments bear primary responsibility to protect civilians, while United Nations agencies and other international community actors can provide support for the implementation of existing provisions. That should be done in keeping with State sovereignty and in accordance with guidelines provided by the Government in question. In that respect, it is important to draw a clear distinction between the protection of civilians and the provision of humanitarian assistance. (...)</p> <p><i>(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)</i></p>
Mexico	Ambassador Claude Heller	<p>One of the most important outcomes of the 2005 Summit was the recognition of the principle of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Almost two years later, we have witnessed enormous difficulties in the application of this principle in concrete situations and in translating the spirit that led to its adoption into actions that have a positive impact on the lives of hundreds of</p>

		<p>thousands of people. The resolutions adopted on the situation in Darfur illustrate the difficulties encountered in this respect and the “diplomatic inertia” to which the Secretary General recently alluded in a press article.</p> <p>We all know that the debate about the responsibility to protect is interlinked with the fundamental principles of international law. Despite the consensus reached in 2005, we cannot deny that mistrust prevails on this matter. While some States see in this new principle the mere continuance of interventionist practices aimed at destabilizing political regimes, others promote its application in a selective manner, limiting its scope to cases significant for their political interests. For this reason, it is essential that we commit ourselves to reach new agreements that give a true content to such an important principle in an objective and impartial manner. (...)</p> <p><i>(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)</i></p>
Peru	<p>President Alejandro Toledo</p> <p>Ambassador Voto-Bernales</p>	<p>My country considers that the Security Council should be more efficient and transparent in its effort to face the current international scenario. In this regard, it is worth stressing the importance that the permanent members of the Security Council be able to join their disposition in order not to use their veto power when dealing with cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes or massive or systematic violations to human rights, as these circumstances endanger peace and international security.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p> <p>According to the information that Mr. Egeland provided, much work remains to be done if the United Nations is to be effective in protecting civilians in armed conflict. In view of the situations that he described, we must reaffirm the responsibility of the United Nations to protect human rights throughout the world and the duty to prevent war crimes, genocide and ethnic cleansing.</p> <p><i>(Security Council Second Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 04 December 2006)</i></p> <p>The threat of the recurrence of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity has sharpened our resolve to recognize that we have a responsibility to protect people from such scourges. Thus States Members of the United Nations, including Council members, must be vigilant in order to fulfill our mandate to protect peoples when the State concerned is unable to do so or unwilling to comply with its obligations.</p> <p><i>(Security Council debate on Threats to International Peace and Security, 8 January 2007)</i></p>

	<p>Deputy Permanent Rep. Luis Enrique Chávez</p>	<p>(...)First, the Security Council must seek to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1674 (2006), which contains crucial provisions for the improvement of the international system to protect civilians in armed conflict. That includes the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. (...)</p> <p><i>(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)</i></p>
<p>Panama</p>	<p>Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias</p>	<p>Thus, international humanitarian law -specifically The Hague and Geneva Conventions and their protocols, other human rights instruments and Security Council resolutions — provide a broad and compelling framework for United Nations action to protect civilians in armed conflict.</p> <p>Nevertheless, this Organization has often failed to resort to those mechanisms to act, shirking our responsibility to protect civilians in the most atrocious conflicts. The conflicts in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the current conflict in Darfur and the recent events in Lebanon are clear examples of that situation. The failure to act has cost this Organization credibility, but the blow to our reputation is insignificant when weighed against the loss of innocent lives. We must never forget those victims if we wish to avoid falling once again into inertia.</p> <p>I cannot conclude without stressing the ultimate role of this Organization with respect to international humanitarian law, as reflected in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit, which refer to the responsibility of States and the international community to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It is our understanding that the responsibility to protect implies that, over and above the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, when a State or, to phrase it more aptly, its governmental institutions are unwilling or unable to meet their responsibility to protect the human rights of their citizens, it is up to the international community, and the United Nations in particular, to adopt timely and decisive collective measures to do so.</p> <p><i>(Security Council Third Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UN Security Council, 22 June 2007)</i></p>

<p>Trinidad and Tobago</p>	<p>Ambassador Philip Sealy, Permanent Rep. of Trinidad and Tobago</p>	<p>Trinidad and Tobago also views with growing alarm the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Darfur region of Sudan and calls upon the international community to exercise its responsibility to protect the people of Darfur. The international community has a fundamental legal and moral obligation to act in cases such as this of egregious violations of human rights.</p> <p><i>(General Assembly, 61st Session, 27 September 2006)</i></p>
<p>Venezuela</p>	<p>President Hugo Chavez Frías</p>	<p>Today we claim from the peoples, in this case the people of Venezuela, a new international economic order, but it is also eminent a new international political order, let's not allow a handful of countries try to reinterpret with impunity the principles of the International Law to give way to doctrines like "Preemptive War", how do they threaten us with preemptive war!, and the now so called "Responsibility to Protect", but we have to ask ourselves who is going to protect us, how are they going to protect us.</p> <p><i>(World Summit General Assembly, 60th Session, 14-16 September 2005)</i></p>