France includes RtoP in its White Papers : "defence and national security" and "France and Europe in World Politics" June and July 2008 *The French government issued two important White Papers in the summer 2008 which both integrate RtoP to the government's principal guidelines for foreign policy. The French government, urging the European Union to follow in its steps, commits to respecting human rights worldwide and recognizes RtoP as a fundamental norm part of world peace and international security.*

The first paper entitled 'The French White paper on defence and national security" is the result of a Commission set up in 2007 to redefine France's foreign and domestic policies in a 15-year perspective including defence and national security. The second White Paper entitled " France and Europe in World Politics" seeks to identify the priority missions of French diplomacy in an evolving world and give recommendations to rearrange the structure and organization of the European and Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Both papers make reference to France's embrace RtoP as an international norm for the protection of populations from mass atrocities, as seen below in the excerpts from the two White Papers.

"The French White Paper on defence and national security"

(page 9) The United Nations in Central Position

Today threats and natural risks have taken on a
global dimension: war, proliferation, terrorism, pandemic disease, organised crime,
wide-ranging natural catastrophes. All of these threats must be faced by an effective and
legitimate international security system.

France considers therefore that it is essential to
reinforce international institutions

to act in favour of peace and international security. Consequently, the White Paper: (…)

- Gives priority to the reinforcement of
multilateralism which, conversely to unilateralist temptations, remains the founding principle of
international cooperation and security.

- Reaffirms the central role of the United Nations and its institutions: the
authorisation of the use of force by the Security Council is and must be the rule (…)

- Confirms France's support to Humanitarian law, The International Criminal Court,

and the promotion of Human Rights.

- Recalls that the international community as a whole has the "
responsibility to protect
" (…)

(page 11) Guidelines governing the commitment of armed forces abroad

- (…) The consideration, prior to the use of armed force, of other possible measures, without prejudice to emergency situations involving legitimate defence or the
responsibility to protect (R2P)
(…)

See full document in
 English
and in
 French

White Paper: " France and Europe in World Politics"

(page 20-21) Issues surrounding humanitarian intervention and the protection of human rights have progressed but have created division within the international community

However tenuous and contested, the human rights and humanitarian intervention fields have accomplished important developments

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The responsibility to protect
.
Its endorsement at the UN 2005 World Summit should be regarded as a historical development, considering the deep ideological and political divisions surrounding the concept and its implementation.

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Human rights and democracy
. Globally, human rights have progressed over the past fifty years. Yet, the universality of these rights is again challenged by some States in the name of religion or identity.

Claims of sovereignty.
Sovereignty remains as important, especially as an integral part of democracy and national independence. Violation of sovereignty is often used as a reason to oppose human rights universality and humanitarian intervention (…)

2. p. 47-48 Mettre les droits de l'homme au centre de notre action

.
Putting human rights at the centre of our agenda

Issues of humanitarian and human rights protection can no longer be separated from security matters. Mass atrocities, in or outside of conflict, are now considered breaches to international peace and security. Nonetheless, there is no spontaneous harmony between peace and human rights: peace and stability are concepts based on mutual recognition of the interests of sovereign nation-states. Conversely, justice and human rights go beyond borders. The protection of human rights can come in conflict with other legitimate international agendas such as the need for cooperation between states, with the recognition of equal sovereignty of states and in extreme cases, with peace itself. Moreover, the protection of human rights is not necessarily compatible with the legitimate concern we all share, that is promoting our own interests, for instance of economic nature (…)

(…) Implementing our agenda involves taking action at the national level, but also more systematically in the development of legal and political norms (an area in which this country has traditionally been invested) as well as in mobilizing the multilateral system on issues of human rights (Security Council, development bodies and agencies Our agenda will also need to cover a wide spectrum of action:
the responsibility to protect
, far from being summarized as military intervention, comprises a triple dimension: the responsibility to prevent, the responsibility to react (with military force as last resort), and the responsibility to rebuild(…)

See full document in
[French](#)

Please note that the above translation is the unofficial ICRtoP translation.