

**Responsibility to Protect: A Latin American Perspective** Ricardo Arredondo 20 Sw. J. Int'l L. 347  
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The question of humanitarian intervention was a central theme of the international agenda between the end of the Cold War, and up until the events of September 11, 2001. After the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999, the Secretary-General of the United Nations ("UNSG") at the time posed an interrogation to the UN: How should the international community react when human rights violations occur within a State, bearing in mind the traditional principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs?'

Events such as those in Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Haiti, and Kosovo, among others, exemplify the lack of response from the international community to these mass atrocities. The rejection of humanitarian intervention by a large number of States evidenced the need to start looking for a different answer to these types of situations.

More than a decade after the emergence of the Responsibility to Protect ("R2P") principle and eight years after its endorsement' by the international community, recent events have once again emphasized both the importance and challenges of ensuring timely and decisive responses to the four core crimes covered by the principle.' These events have stressed the need to further operationalize the principle in order to implement it effectively and prevent mass atrocities.

Recent events related to specific crises such as those in Sri Lanka and Cote d'Ivoire, the recent intervention in Libya, the ongoing conflicts in Syria and the Central African Republic ("CAR") among others, demonstrate the persistent challenges involved in reaching a common understanding on how to ensure the timely and effective implementation of the R2P principle. At the same time, it is difficult to generate a common political will and an effective capacity to prevent or stop genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, whether committed by national and local authorities or nonstate actors.

On the contrary, these discussions are not absent in Latin America and the Caribbean. As a matter of fact, this region has taken lead on the R2P debate by bringing about its own experiences and perspectives that shape a unique reading of the international community and its responsibilities when dealing with the State's inability to protect its own people and prevent mass atrocities.

In light of such difficult questions, this Article analyzes Latin America's past and present stance on the R2P principle. (...)

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