

17 July 2009 News Update

RtoP Listserv

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I. Responsibility to Protect at the UN next week and related events

20 JULY: ICRtoP EVENT: A DIALOGUE WITH CIVIL SOCIETY IN ADVANCE OF GA DEBATE

21 JULY: BAN KI-MOON PRESENTS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

22 JULY: PRESS CONFERENCE PRIOR TO GA DEBATE ON IMPLEMENTING RtoP

23 JULY: INTERACTIVE THEMATIC DIALOGUE ON RtoP BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (10AM)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON BAN'S REPORT ON RtoP (3PM)

24 JULY: (CONTINUED) GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON RtoP

II. Obama discusses the Responsibility to Protect

1. PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE PRESIDENT, 10 JULY 2009, L'AQUILA, ITALY

III. Pope calls for the Implementation of the Responsibility to Protect

1. ENCYCLICAL LETTER -- CARITAS IN VERITATE (7 JULY 2009)

IV. Many Approve of ICC Indictment of Bashir: Poll of 7 Muslim and African Nations

1. MANY DISAPPROVE OF BASHIR AND HIS CRIMES IN DARFUR

** Reminder to organizations: Last call to sign-on to ICRtoP's NGO Letter to UN missions in advance of the debate on 20 July [TO SIGN ON CLICK HERE](#) **

I. Responsibility to Protect at the UN next week and related events

20 July 2009, Monday: ICRtoP Event--A Dialogue with Civil Society in Advance of General Assembly Debate

1:00pm-3:00pm at UN Church Center/ 777 UN Plaza (Corner of 44th street and 1st Avenue)

Please join us next Monday as we hear from civil society groups about their support for the Responsibility to Protect, their perspectives on the Secretary-General's report and their expectations for the General Assembly debate, and what they have been doing to build support for the norm within their capitals and regions.

Introductory Remarks:

Edward Luck, Special Adviser to the Secretary General on the Responsibility to Protect

Guest Speakers:

Jacqueline Murekatete, Fellow, Miracle Corners of the World and Program Director, Jacqueline's Human Rights Corner

Dismas Nkunda, Co-Director, International Refugee Rights Initiative and Co-Chair, Darfur Consortium

Nicola Reindorp, Director of Advocacy, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Moderated by:

William Pace, Executive Director, WFM-Institute for Global Policy

RSVP to info@responsibilitytoprotect.org

by Friday July 17, 2009. Please circulate widely to colleagues and networks.

21 July 2009, Tuesday: UN SG Ban Ki-moon presents report on Implementing the Responsibility to Protect

10am at General Assembly Chamber, United Nations

Due to prior travel commitments, the Secretary-General will not be able to participate in the proceedings of the General Assembly Debate on the Responsibility to Protect on 23 July. For this reason, the Secretary-General will present his [report](#) on the Implementation of Responsibility to Protect (A/63/677) to the Membership

22 July 2009, Wednesday: Press Conference-- Prior to the General Assembly Debate on the Secretary-General's Report "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect"

11am, Room S226, also live on webcast at <http://www.un.org/webcast/>

SPEAKERS:

Gareth Evans, Former Australian Foreign Minister and Co-Chair of the International Advisory Board of the Responsibility to Protect

Juan Mendez, Former UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, and member of the International Advisory Board, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Jacqueline Murekatete, Fellow, Miracle Corners of the World and Program Director, Jacqueline's Human Rights Corner

Thelma Ekiyor, Executive Director of the West Africa Civil Society Institute and member of the International Advisory Board, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

23 July 2009, Thursday

Interactive Thematic Dialogue on RtoP by the General Assembly

10am Trusteeship Council Chamber, United Nations

The General Assembly will convene an informal thematic dialogue at the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The morning's interactive dialogue will consist of an introductory segment, followed by a panel bringing together key voices in the international debate on responsibility to protect.

The thematic dialogue will serve as a prelude to the formal discussion in plenary.

General Assembly Debate on UN SG's report on the Responsibility to Protect

3pm at General Assembly Chamber, United Nations

A plenary meeting of the General Assembly will be held to consider the matter under agenda items 44 entitled "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields" and 107 entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit". The debate is expected to continue into 24 July 2009, Friday

II. Obama discusses the Responsibility to Protect

1. Press Conference by the President, L'Aquila, Italy
Office of the Press Secretary, The White House
10 July 2009

(...) Q: On this trip you have been talking about state sovereignty as a cornerstone of international order. How do you reconcile that with the concept of Responsibility to Protect, which used to be the cornerstone for lots of victims?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm sorry, how do I reconcile that with **Responsibility to Protect**, which used to be what?

Q: The cornerstone of hope for lots of people in post-war conflict.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if I understand your question correctly, on the one hand we think that respecting the sovereignties of nation states is important. We don't want stronger nations bullying weaker nations. On the other hand, where you have nations that are oppressing their people, isn't there an international responsibility to intervene? It is one of the most difficult questions in international affairs. And I don't think that there is a clean formula. What I would say is, is that in general it's important for the sovereignty of nations to be respected and to resolve conflicts between nations through diplomacy and through international organizations in trying to set up international norms that countries want to meet.

There are going to be exceptional circumstances in which I think the need for international intervention becomes a moral imperative, the most obvious example being in a situation like Rwanda where genocide has occurred.

Gordon Brown during the last session told a incredibly powerful story, and I may not be getting all the details perfectly right, but he said he had gone to Rwanda, went to some sort of museum or exhibition that commemorated the -- or marked the tragedy in Rwanda, and there was a photograph of a 12-year-old boy, and it gave his name, and that he loved soccer, and he wanted to be a doctor, and provided his biography. And the last line on this exhibit said that right before he and his mother was killed, he turned to his mother and he said, "Don't worry, the United Nations is going to come save us."

And that voice has to be heard in international relations. The threshold at which international intervention is appropriate I think has to be very high. There has to be a strong international outrage at what's taking place.

It's not always going to be a neat decision, and there are going to be objections to just about any decision, because there are some in the international community who believe that state sovereignty is sacrosanct and you never intervene under any circumstances in somebody's internal affairs.

I think rather than focus on hypotheticals, what my administration wants to do is to build up international norms, put pressure -- economic, diplomatic, et cetera -- on nations that are not acting in accordance with universal values towards their citizens, but not hypothesize on particular circumstances, take each case as it comes. (...)

Source:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Press-Conference-by-the-President-in-LAquila-Italy-7-10-09/

III. Pope calls for the Implementation of the Responsibility to Protect

1. Encyclical Letter
Caritas in Veritate
Benedict XVI
7 July 2009

(...) 67. In the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need, even in the midst of a global recession, for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth. One also senses the urgent need to find innovative ways of implementing the principle of the **Responsibility to Protect** and of giving poorer nations an effective voice in shared decision-making. This seems necessary in order to arrive at a political, juridical and economic order, which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity. (...)

Source: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn146

IV. Many Approve of ICC Indictment of Bashir: Poll of 7 Muslim and African Nations

1. Strong Support for UN Intervention in Darfur if Aid Blockage Leads to Deaths

World Public Opinion.org

17 July 2009

A WorldPublicOpinion.org poll of seven majority-Muslim and African nations finds that, contrary to the position of their governments, publics in four nations approve of the indictment of Sudanese President Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur, one is divided and two are opposed. (..)

However large majorities approve of the ICC indictment in Kenya (77%), and Nigeria (71%), as does a modest majority in Turkey (51% with 22% disapproving), and a plurality in Pakistan (39% with 32% disapproving). (...)

In two nations a majority disapproves of the indictment: the Palestinian territories (70% with 25% approving) and Egypt (52%, with 47% approving). Iraqis are evenly divided (35% approve, 37% disapprove). (...)

In response to the ICC indictment, President Bashir expelled from Sudan many aid organizations providing relief to hundreds of thousands of displaced people living in refugee camps in Darfur. Respondents were asked, "If as a result many people in these camps start dying from hunger and exposure, do you think the UN should bring in food and other aid, escorted by military protection if necessary, even against the will of the government or do you think this would be too much of a violation of Sudan's sovereignty?"

Support for such a UN intervention is very strong, including among some publics that oppose the indictment. Large majorities would favor it in Kenya (82%), Nigeria (68%), Egypt (61%), the Palestinian territories (60%), as well as a plurality in Iraq (46% to 29%). Only in Pakistan does a plurality oppose the idea (42% to 37%).

These attitudes are consistent with earlier polling on the concept of the UN having a “**Responsibility to Protect**

.” WorldPublicOpinion.org asked respondents from 20 nations whether the UN Security Council has a responsibility to authorize military force to protect people from severe human rights violations. Majorities or pluralities in all 20 nations polled agreed that the Security Council does have this responsibility, including five of the nations in the present poll: Kenya (89%), Egypt (80%), Nigeria (78%), the Palestinian territories (69%), and Turkey (39% to 20%).

In the current poll publics in five nations were also asked whether they have confidence in Bashir to do the right in international affairs as part of a battery that included leaders from many other nations.

Bashir received poor confidence ratings in four of the five nations asked. Most said they have not too much or no confidence in him in Kenya (63%), Turkey (52%), Egypt (51%), and Nigeria (49%). Only in the Palestinian territories did a slight majority (51%) say they have some or a lot of confidence.(...)

Support for forcible UN intervention in the event that the expulsion of aid organizations leads to large scale suffering also tends to rise with greater information.(...)

For more information, please visit: http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/btjusticehuman_rightsra/624.php?nid=&id=&pnt=624&lb

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Thanks to Lan Shiow Tsai for compiling this listserv