

30 August 2012 Web: www.responsibilitytoprotect.org Info: info@responsibilitytoprotect.org

Listserv: [Subscribe](#)

Blog: icrtopblog.org Facebook: [Join us](#) Twitter: [Follow us](#) Become an [NGO Supporter](#)

I. Syria: Civilian casualties and refugee population increase in ongoing civil war

1. Irwin Cotler, Huffington Post – 10 Steps to a Peaceful Syria
2. Patrick Quinton-Brown, Canadian International Council – Saving R2P from Syria

II. FEMNET Mali and ICRtoP partner for workshop on RtoP in Mali

III. RtoP-Related Publications

1. Asia-Pacific Centre for R2P – ASEAN and the UN GA Dialogue on the SG’s Report on Timely and Decisive Response
2. UN News Centre - Interview with New UN Deputy Secretary-General
3. Sara Davies, Protection Gateway – R2P + WPS = preventing SGBV
4.
Book
: Vesselin Popovski, Charles Sampford, and Angus Francis – “Norms of Protection: Responsibility to Protect, Protection of Civilians and Their Interaction”

IV. Upcoming RtoP-Related Events

7 September 2012

, Panel Discussion – Roads to a Free Syria: What are the International Community’s Responsibilities and Options?

Hudson Institute

8 October 2012,

Conference – The Responsibility to Protect: What Next?

World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA)

I. Syria: Civilian casualties and refugee population increase in ongoing civil war [New](#)

Special Envoy begins tenure as casualties from civil war mount

On 16 August 2012, Algerian diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi

[agreed](#)

to become the UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy to Syria, stating that he would focus on breaking the

[deadlock](#)

in the UN Security Council (UNSC) on the crisis and strive to achieve a political transition. On 23 August Syrian deputy foreign minister, Faisal Muqdad,

[stated](#)

that Syria was ready to cooperate with the newly appointed envoy and that he hoped Brahimi would facilitate a “national dialogue”. An emergency UNSC meeting was

[called](#)

for Thursday 30 August, but diplomats agreed that there would be no further action from the Council on Syria aside from dealing with humanitarian aid.

Violence across Syria throughout August continued to affect civilians with Amnesty International

[reporting](#)

on 23 August that battles between Syrian government officials and the opposition in Aleppo were placing civilians at risk, mostly because of continued indiscriminate attacks by Syrian forces. On 25 August, activists on the ground

[reported](#)

that over 200 Syrians, including women and children, had been massacred by Syrian forces in Daraya. Three days later, a car bomb set off at a funeral in a suburb of Jaramana, an area where the population is primarily supportive of Syrian President Assad,

[resulted](#)

in 27 casualties, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The Syrian state media blamed rebel fighters for the incident while opposition activists accused the government of staging the bomb to divert attention away from civilian deaths from army assaults. On 30 August, Human Right Watch

[reported](#)

that over the past three weeks at least 10 bakeries had been targeted for attacks in Aleppo, killing and injuring numerous civilians waiting in line for bread with one attack killing up to 60 and wounding more than 70. Ethnic tensions also increased over the border with clashes in the Lebanese city of

[Tripoli](#)

between Sunnis and Alawites, the Muslim sect to which Assad belongs, resulting in death of at least 15 people on 21 August.

Refugee population strains neighboring countries

The number of refugees entering Turkey and Jordan increased dramatically between July and August. Having taken in more than 80,000 refugees as of 27 August, Turkey

rushed

to build more camps to increase their capacity to 100,000 in an effort to shelter the approximately 10,000 Syrian refugees waiting across the border. The following day, Turkey

announced

that they were revising plans in hopes to be able to receive up to 120,000 refugees, while the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

warned

that the number of Syrian refugees fleeing to Turkey could reach 200,000 as the conflict continues. Jordan also

faced difficulty

in coping with the influx of refugees, as the number flowing into Jordan

doubled

during the week of 21 August, and called for increased international aid.

1. 10 Steps to a Peaceful Syria

Irwin Cotler

Huffington Post

24 August 2012

Irwin Cotler is a Professor of Law (Emeritus) at McGill University and former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

(...) In Libya, the UN Security Council invoked the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine -- the international law principle authorizing international collective action "to protect [a state's] population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity" if the state where these crimes are being committed is unable or unwilling to protect its citizens -- or worse, as in the case of Syria, it is the author of such crimes. In Syria, it is as if this principle had never been adopted by the international community, let alone the obligation to implement it. (...)

(...) What is so necessary now (...) is for the United States, in concert with the EU, the Arab League, Turkey, Canada, and other "Friends of Syria" to move to implement the following measures with all deliberate speed:

First,

protection against the threat of weapons of mass destruction (...)

Second

, it is necessary to interdict and sanction the substantial Iranian and Hezbollah military assistance to the Syrian regime (...)

Third

, enhanced support for the besieged opposition (...)

Fourth

, safe havens must be established. (...)

Fifth

, such safe havens, which are necessary for Aleppo, are no less crucial for Syria as a whole (...)

Sixth

, it is necessary that the United States -- together with Arab, Turkish, European, and other allies -- work to unify the patchwork Syrian opposition (...)

Seventh

, the Syrian political and army leadership must be put on notice that they will be held accountable for their grave violations of international law (...)

Eighth

, the international community must protect against the risk of rising sectarian violence (...)

Ninth

, there needs to be the mandated deployment of a large international Arab-led peace protection force in Syria (...)

Tenth

, there is a clear and compelling need for enhanced humanitarian assistance arising from the exponential increase in internally displaced people within Syria (...)

Read the
[full article](#)

.

Read his article published in the Edmonton Journal on 24 August,
["World must aid Syria now"](#)

2. Saving R2P from Syria

Patrick Quinton-Brown

Canadian International Council

14 August 2012

Patrick Quinton-Brown is Co-Chair of Toronto-based ICRtoP Member, the Canadian Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

(...) Both critics and advocates agree that Syria is putting R2P in crisis. If the principle is to serve as an international norm and moral imperative to stop mass atrocities, why has it failed to prompt any form of binding resolution from the UN? The third pillar of R2P clearly states that when a state fails to uphold its responsibility to protect, the international community has an obligation to intervene by diplomatic, economic, or, if necessary, military means. (...)

At least rhetorically, both China and Russia justify their vetoes by suggesting that sanctions – or any other kind of coercion, for that matter – will only intensify the flames of the conflict. Moreover, in a manner that Susan Rice describes as “paranoid,” they predict the West will deceptively interpret resolutions to justify military intervention and regime change. To these states and their allies, the language of protection that has characterized recent council debates is simply a moral guise for military recklessness intended to advance national interests.

The current deadlock cannot be understood in isolation from the Libyan experience, which appears to have set an unfortunate precedent for intervention. Instead of lending credibility, R2P implementation in Libya only fuelled suspicions that the principle is synonymous with regime change and loose resolution interpretations. (...)

(...) Now is a prime opportunity to experiment with Brazil’s “responsibility while protecting” (RWP) idea.

(...) By failing to speak up on RWP in Syria, Brazil appears to be adopting the same hypocrisy its new idea is committed to abolishing. It is also missing a fundamental opportunity to assert itself as an emerging middle power.

(...) An upcoming UN dialogue on R2P's third pillar is scheduled for Sept. 5. If R2P is to ever gain the full support of dissenter states such as China or Russia, scholars and stakeholders must work to ensure RWP gets more attention. (...)

Read the
[full article](#)

II. FEMNET-Mali and ICRtoP partner for Workshop on RtoP in Mali

Réseau des Femmes africaines pour le développement et de la communication (FEMNET-Mali)

2-3 August 2012

On 02-03 August,

Réseau des Femmes africaines pour le développement et de la communication (FEMNET-Mali), in partnership with the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, held a workshop on the Responsibility to protect in Bamako, Mali.

The purpose of the event was to inform participants of the concept RtoP, consider the full range of protection obligations consistent with the principles of the responsibility to protect, and gather recommendations for role of the state, ECOWAS, international community and civil society.

Attending the opening ceremony were representatives from the Ministry of Defense and Veterans Affairs, the Department of Homeland Security and Civil Protection, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Justice, civil society organizations, and State and private media. The full report, in French, will be posted on our website in the coming weeks.

Please refer to FEMNET's

[website](#)

for more information.

For more civil society action on Mali, see the “

[Declaration on the Political Situation in West Africa](#)

” issued by the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF).

III. RtoP-Related Publications

1. R2P Ideas in Brief: ASEAN and the UN GA Dialogue on the SG's Report on Timely and

Decisive Response (Vol. 2 No. 7)

Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

30 August 2012

(...) The interactive dialogue in the UN GA on 5 September is a good opportunity for member states to openly discuss the third pillar of R2P (timely and decisive response) in dealing with mass atrocities. In the aftermath of the UN Security Council's resolutions on Libya and the continuing crisis in Syria, the application of the principle has generated a number of concerns and controversies, including accountability in using coercive measures while protecting civilians, as well as the relationship between R2P and regime change.

Thus far, the discourse on Pillar 3 has been dominated by the P5 and emerging powers in the UN, especially after the Libyan crisis. The views of developing states, particularly from the Asia Pacific, also need to be heard , and the UN GA interactive dialogue in September provides an important opportunity for them to present their response to the SG's Report. (...)

In 2009, five members of ASEAN participated in the first interactive dialogue on R2P in the UN GA. Since then, no member state of ASEAN has participated in subsequent UN GA dialogue over the last two years. It is important to note, however, that a good majority of the members of ASEAN have participated in debates that saw relevant resolutions condemning systematic violations of human rights in Syria passed in the UN GA (February 2012 and more recently on 3 August 2012) and the UN Human Rights Council (June 2012). This clearly indicates that for a number of ASEAN members, the ongoing mass atrocities in Syria remain a serious international security problem. Thus, ASEAN members should seriously consider participating in this year's interactive dialogue on the SG's Report in order to:

- 1) reaffirm their commitment to the R2P principle as embodied in paragraphs 138-139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document ;
- 2) articulate their views about Pillar 3, including their concerns about coercive measures in implementing R2P as well as the constraints and lessons learned by individual countries from the crises in Libya and Syria;
- 3) contribute to ongoing discussions/debate about Responsibility while Protecting (RwP) as proposed by Brazil.

This year's UN GA dialogue on timely and decisive response should also encourage ASEAN members to exercise their diplomatic leverage to ensure that the P5 take their responsibility to

protect obligations seriously, echoing the strong balance of opinion in the recent 3 August 2012 UN GA resolution on Syria.

Read the
[full brief](#)

.

Read the Asia-Pacific Centre's
[announcement](#)
of the start of Phase Two of their RtoP program.

2. Interview with New UN Deputy Secretary-General

UN News Centre

27 August 2012

Jan Eliasson began his term as the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations on 1 July 2012.

(...)

UN News Centre:

While serving as President of the General Assembly in 2005, you were heavily involved in the meeting which led to the establishment of the principle of the 'responsibility to protect' (also known as 'R2P'). How have you seen its development since then?

Deputy Secretary-General

:

Well, the responsibility to protect says something very important and that is that States and Governments have a responsibility to protect their own population from ethnic cleansing, genocide and mass killing.

That's the easy part of the formulation from 2005. The more difficult part is what happens when governments cannot live up to that responsibility. That's when the international community has a responsibility.

But when we negotiated that principle, it was very important that we underlined the preventive element, to get in early, and also that everything had to be done on a collective basis – you cannot make reference to the responsibility to protect for an individual action from a

government, you have to do it on a collective basis – but, unfortunately, it seems that the preventive element has got lost in the debate after Libya.

I think we need to restore that balance, bring back the preventive element, because we cannot throw away the baby with the bath-tub water and say that the responsibility to protect does not work. I think we have achieved something very important by establishing this principle that every government, every state has that responsibility.

(...) I hope that we will have a continued attachment to this principle, but particularly remind ourselves of the preventive elements. (...)

Read the
[full transcript of the interview](#)

.

3. R2P + WPS = preventing SGBV

Sara Davies

Protection Gateway

20 August 2012

Sara Davies is a Senior Research Fellow at the Human Protection Hub at the Griffith Asia Institute and Centre of Governance and Public Policy

at
Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia. Below, she discusses an upcoming Human Protection Hub workshop, to be held in October 2012 - in partnership the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect - for policy makers and academics to discuss the potential relationship between the Responsibility to Protect and Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

Widespread and/or systematic sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) can be an act of genocide, a war crime and a crime against humanity, three of the four crimes listed in the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle. As such, the protection of those at risk of SGBV is not just part of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda at the UN, it is a fundamental responsibility for all states as part of their commitment to R2P. However, there remain a variety of different views concerning the merits and utility of aligning WPS with R2P

. In particular, views differ as to whether there is anything to be gained for the WPS agenda or for the R2P principle by advancing action to tackle widespread and systematic SGBV in the UN

system, including the Security Council, as part of a coordinated strategy for implementing R2P and WPS.

Are opportunities being missed by failing to align the prevention and protection agendas in WPS and R2P? What are the potential costs and benefits of aligning the two agendas in some respects? And, how are the common interests of the two agendas best advanced? (...)

To examine the potential relationship between WPS and R2P, we at the Human Protection Hub with our research partners, the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, are preparing a workshop with policy makers and academics in October 2012 that will focus on whether these areas should be aligned with the prevention and protection aims of R2P. We have four broad questions:

1. Alignment of R2P with WPS – where is the value best added?
2. The relationship between R2P and WPS for conflict prevention and civilian protection in international policing and military missions
3. Operationalisation of WPS in humanitarian response
4. Positive relationship between the ‘responsible state’ and WPS: building on knowledge of the specific drivers and national benchmarks that promote peace and security

The central focus in the workshop is on the potential advantages and pitfalls in aligning R2P with WPS. As stated above, there are concerns that aligning the R2P lens with WPS undermines the protection of civilians and peaceful empowerment focus in the WPS agenda. Is the ‘natural’ alignment between R2P and WPS primarily about identifying women as victims of sexual violence rather than empowered individuals able to protect themselves? Or alternatively, may a ‘R2P lens’ highlight the enduring responsibility of all sovereigns to promote and protect the normative goals of WPS? One thing is certain: it is vital that we better understand the drivers that prevent widespread and systematic SGBV. This knowledge is crucial for both the R2P principle and the WPS agenda. Our hope is to generate dialogue on the scope for cooperation and opportunities that will produce practical outcomes that empower women.

Read the

[full article](#)

4.

Book:

Norms of Protection: Responsibility to Protect, Protection of Civilians and Their Interaction

Vesselin Popovski, Charles Sampford, and Angus Francis

United Nations University Press

December 2012 (*prospective*)

Angus Francis

is Senior Lecturer and Program Leader of the Human Rights and Governance Program in the Faculty of Law at Queensland University of Technology.

Vesselin Popovski

is Senior Academic Programme Officer and Head of Section “Peace and Security”, at the Institute for Sustainability and Peace at the United Nations University, Tokyo.

Charles Sampford

is Foundation Dean, a Professor of Law and Research and a Professor of Ethics at Griffith University, and serves as Director at the Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law.

A series of humanitarian tragedies in the 1990s (Somalia, 1992–1994; Rwanda, 1994; Srebrenica, 1995; Kosovo, 1999) demonstrated the failure of the international community to protect civilians in the context of complex emergencies. These brought to life two norms of protection – Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and Protection of Civilians (POC) – both deeply rooted in the empathy that human beings have for the suffering of innocent people. The norms have achieved high-level endorsement: R2P from the 2005 World Summit Outcome document (Art. 138–140) and POC from a series of Security Council resolutions. The two norms of protection were instrumental in adopting Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973 (Libya), and 1975 (Cote d’Ivoire) in 2011. Both norms raise concerns of misinterpretation and misuse. They are developing – sometimes in parallel, sometimes diverging and sometimes converging – with varying degrees of institutionalization and acceptance. This process is likely to continue for some time with successes and failures enhancing or retarding that development. This book engages in a profound comparative analysis of the norms and aims to serve policy-makers at various levels (national, regional and UN); practitioners with protective roles (force commanders, military trainers, strategists and humanitarian actors); academics and researchers (in international relations, law, political theory and ethics); civil society and R2P and POC advocates. (...)

Find

[more information](#)

or preorder the book.

IV. Upcoming RtoP-Related Events

1. Panel Discussion – Roads to a Free Syria: What are the International Community's Responsibilities and Options?

Hudson Institute Headquarters, Washington D.C.

7 September 2012, 12:00pm-2:00pm

"Responsibility to Protect" (R2P), a widely acknowledged but inconsistently observed principle of international relations, obliges individual state actors to shield their populations from mass violence — and requires the international community to assist such states in the fulfillment of that duty.

Does R2P apply to the crisis in Syria? If so, how and to what practical effect? What other responsibilities and options might the United States and its allies have with respect to Syria's civilian population? And, more broadly, what are the near- and long-term prospects for a secure, stable, secular, and democratic post-Assad regime in Damascus?

A panel of distinguished experts will discuss these and related questions in light of current, still unfolding events.

Panelists will include Marah Bukai,

Syrian poet and political activist involved in the Syrian revolution;

Naser Khader,

Adjunct Fellow, Hudson Institute, and former Member of the Danish Parliament;

Nasser Rabbat,

Aga Khan Professor and the Director of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Hillel Fradkin, Senior Fellow and Director of Hudson Institute's Center on Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World will moderate.

Find

[more information](#)

or

[register](#)

for the event.

2. Conference on “The Responsibility to Protect: What Next?”

World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA)

New Delhi, India

8 October 2012

WFUNA and the Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA) will be inviting budding activists, academics and UN and government officials to a daylong Conference on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in New Delhi, India. (...)

This year the Informal General Assembly Dialogue on R2P will focus on third pillar measures of R2P. The basic principle of R2P rests on the understanding that state sovereignty implies responsibility and the primary responsibility for the protection of its people lies with the state itself. Where, however, a population is suffering serious harm and the state in question is unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention and national sovereignty yields to the international responsibility to protect (ICISS 2001). In light of the recent developments in Libya and Syria questions have emerged as to how the international community should employ their responsibility and when third pillar measures should be used.

The Conference will ask key members of the UN community, civil society members, and government officials if, when and how it is suitable for the international community to intervene to protect civilians from mass atrocities. It will identify benefits of using the R2P framework and gaps in the current protection systems. This discussion will be followed by reflecting on the necessary steps that still need to be taken to ensure more effective implementation of R2P to prevent mass atrocities in the coming decade.

For more information, contact our R2P Program Officer

[Laura Spano](#)

or visit the

[website](#)

.

Thank you to Amelia Wolf for compiling this listserv.