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Also, don't forget to check out **ICRtoP's latest [blog](#)** , "Putting Down their Cards: Limiting the Veto in RtoP Cases."

Urgent Action Needed to Prevent Fears of Genocide from Becoming a Reality in CAR

Since the Seleka rebel coalition's successful [coup](#) on 24 March 2013, the civilians of the Central African Republic have lived in a state of near-anarchy. Ex-Seleka fighters (and, to a lesser extent, [fighters](#) loyal to the overthrown regime) have [committed](#) numerous and grave human rights violations, including recruitment of child soldiers, torture, widespread rape, and looting. In September and October 2013, exasperated civilians [formed](#) vigilante groups to defend against ex-Seleka fighters. The Anti-Balaka groups, as they are called, have caused a dramatic spike in sectarian conflict, as many anti-Balaka have begun [targeting](#) Muslims in response to reports of ex-Seleka fighters terrorizing Christian communities and arming Muslim populations.

As a result of this appalling deterioration in the CAR, on Friday, 1 November, the UN Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide, Mr. Adama Dieng, briefed the United Nations Security Council on the situation in the Central African Republic. Mr. Dieng [told](#) the Council that urgent action was needed, noting that his Office has been receiving consistent reports of, inter alia, sexual violence, extrajudicial killing of civilians; enforced disappearances, detention and torture. The widespread and unchecked nature of these violations, Mr. Dieng declared, leads him to believe "that they could constitute crimes against humanity or war crimes."

The recent inter-religious violence that has arisen between Muslims and Christians raises particular alarm. When speaking to the press after the Security Council meeting, Mr. Dieng [warned](#) that "my feeling is that this will end with Christian communities, Muslim communities killing each other which means that if we don't act now and decisively I will not exclude the possibility of a genocide occurring."

The Special Adviser ended his intervention by reminding the Security Council that, while the primary responsibility to protect the population of CAR lies with the CAR authorities, "the pledge Member States made in 2005 World Summit Outcome to protect populations from genocide,

war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity must be honoured in the face of the risk of atrocity crimes against Central Africans." Read Mr. Dieng's [full statement](#).

More editorials and civil society reports/statements on CAR:

1. [Amadou Sy](#) , Brookings Institute: No Red Lines in Central African Republic: It's Time to Act. 1 November 2013
2. [Prevention and Protection Working Group](#) : Mass Violence and Imminent Threat to Civilians in Central African Republic, 31 August 2013
3. [Amnesty International](#) : CAR: Violence of Security Forces Now Out of Control. 29 October 2013

Civil Society reports in Sudan, Syria, DRC, and Sri Lanka

□ Sudan: Urgent Fact Finding Needed Into Deaths, Detention of Protesters

Sudan Consortium

1 November 2013

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) should order a fact-finding mission to investigate the deaths and detention of hundreds of demonstrators, a group of 11 international and African organizations said in a letter made public today.(...)

At least 170 protesters have died, 15 of them children, and more than 800 others have been detained.

"The African Commission for Human and People's Rights has so far been silent about the crackdown on protesters in Sudan," said Osman Hummada, executive director of the African Center for Justice and Peace Studies. (...)

Protests began on September 23 in Sudan's major towns, following an announcement the previous day that fuel subsidies would be ended. Many of the protests turned violent as protesters vandalized and set fire to gas stations and police stations, and threw stones at police and security forces. The Sudanese government responded by firing live ammunition and teargas into demonstrations, killing and injuring dozens of people, including children. (...)

Read the [press release](#) .

Read the [here](#) .□

Syria: What Chance to Stop the Slaughter?

Human Rights Watch (Published in New York Review of Books)

Kenneth Roth

30 October 2013

(...) Civilian deaths continue, making it urgent to find some way to curtail the slaughter in the interim. Most paths for doing so go through Moscow. (...) But if Moscow has the power to stop the killing by chemical weapons, why not also stop the slaughter of civilians by conventional means? Why not insist on a new “red line” against the deliberate and indiscriminate killing of civilians? Even if the fighting continues, why not force Assad to concentrate on limiting civilian casualties—to attack only the fish and leave the sea alone? (...) Russia may be indispensable for reining in Assad, but the rest of the world is essential for convincing Russia to do so. The chemical weapons deal represents the best opportunity since the war began to forge a unified international front to stop the slaughter in Syria. But that will happen only with a much more focused and consistent international effort—by both the West and others—to press Russia to live up to its responsibility to protect the people of Syria.

Read the [full article](#).

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DRC: Taking Back Eastern Congo--Comprehensively Addressing the M23 and FDLR Rebel Groups

Enough Project

28 October 2013

A [new Enough Project field report](#) analyzes the strength levels of two key rebel groups in eastern Congo and recommends political and security strategies for U.N. and U.S. leaders to pursue with the Congolese and Rwandan governments as part of a comprehensive peace process. “Taking Back Eastern Congo – Comprehensively Addressing the M23 and FDLR Rebel Groups” describes the complex relations between Congo, Rwanda, and the M23 and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) armed groups that fuel insecurity and armed conflict in eastern Congo. Containing both groups, the report argues, will require addressing the root [security and economic issues](#). Envoys and policymakers should also pursue better disarmament and reintegration plans for fighters and promote better public outreach from the U.N. peacekeeping mission and new U.N. Intervention Brigade. Peacekeeping forces should pursue a broader range of intelligence sources and more thoroughly vet their military partners.

The report argues that addressing Rwanda’s concerns about the threat posed by the rebel FDLR will be a critical part of the strategy to contain the FDLR itself as well as M23 and other armed groups. Rwanda sees the extremist Hutu-led FDLR as a threat because [it has attacked Rwanda](#) in the last year. Kigali denies allegations that it supports M23, which operates in the same region as the rival FDLR. Enough Project argues that successfully containing the FDLR through the U.N. peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, and the U.N. Intervention Brigade can provide security assurances and diplomatic leverage in the effort to discourage support for M23.

Read the [full report.](#)

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Sri Lanka: Minority Women facing increasing levels of sexual violence and insecurity

Minority Rights Group International

16 October 2013

Four years after the end of the armed conflict, Tamil and Muslim women in the north and east of Sri Lanka are increasingly marginalized and face chronic insecurity, says an international rights organisation in a new report.

Thousands of women have lost husbands and other family members, while human rights abuses and violations ranging from sexual violence to land grabbing continue, according to Minority Rights Group International's (MRG) report, [Living with insecurity: Marginalization and sexual violence against women in north and east Sri Lanka](#)

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The women interviewed by MRG said there has been a significant increase in sexual assaults and other rights abuses, due in large part to the heavy militarization of the area. Most were afraid to report cases to the authorities. Many still have no idea where the male members of their families are due to widespread enforced disappearances, whilst some say that their husbands remain in state detention without being charged.

There are an estimated 89,000 war widows in the former conflict areas, with around 40,000 female-headed households. Despite the government's official rhetoric of national reconciliation, many are effectively prevented from mourning their dead as death certificates have not been issued to those who have lost their husbands. The government continues to downplay the numbers of people killed in the last stages of the fighting.

Read the [full article.](#)

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Upcoming RtoP-Related Events and Recent Publications

Preventing Mass Atrocities: Resilient Societies, State Capacity, and Structural Reform

Stanley Foundation Policy Memo

31 October 2013 Vulnerable populations face ongoing threats from political instability, inequality, and conflict. Over the last decade, building resilient societies has emerged as a key doctrine for development and humanitarian practitioners.

At [the 54th](#)

[annual Strategy for Peace Conference](#)

, the Stanley Foundation convened 30 diplomats, mass-atrocity experts, and civil society representatives from across the world to explore the policy dimensions of strengthening communal resilience to mass violence.

Participants identified the following guidelines:

- To achieve resilience, start at the margins.
- Preventive action is dynamic, not static.
- Anticipate unintended consequences.

Though the roundtable focused on the preventive capacity of governments and multilateral organizations, the attendees also drew upon practical experiences to recommend holistic approaches to averting violence.

Read the [policy brief](#).

Protection gaps for civilian victims of political violence

South African Journal of International Affairs

Ramesh Thakur

October 2013

This article begins by explaining why the United Nations' civilian protection agenda is particularly relevant and important for Africa and why the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) might be said to be an African norm export to the rest of the world. Next, it traces the reasons for peace operations' reluctance to use force. It then shows how the civilian protection agenda has tried to fill critical gaps in the existing normative architecture, with both R2P and the Protection of Civilians (POC) resulting from growing shame at the accumulating list of atrocities in which the international community stood by as passive onlookers, frustrations at the 'constitutional' constraints and normative inadequacies rather than indifference and apathy to the plight of civilian victims that produced the passivity, and a determination to reposition the United Nations system to be empowered and capacitated to be able to respond better on both the timeliness and effectiveness dimensions when confronted by repeat occurrences of similar tragedies. The fourth section discusses the merits of the R2P and POC norms in responding to the challenge of civilian protection. The final part notes that, despite these two valuable additions to the repertoire of the international community in dealing with atrocities perpetrated on civilians, there remain many gaps in the protection agenda, as shown in several recent cases.

Read the [full article](#).

Event: The Responsibility to Protect and the Crisis in Libya and Syria

5 December 2013

The Boardroom, 509 Regent Street, University of Westminster, London

Funded by the ESRC and the BISA Working Group on Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect, this event will include a plenary address by the UN Special Adviser for the

Responsibility to Protect, Dr. Jennifer Welsh, and two panel discussions on "Assessing R2P's Efficacy during the Crises in Libya and Syria" and "R2P after the Arab Spring". Please contact Dr Aidan Hehir (a.hehir@wmin.ac.uk) for more details or to reserve a place.