

Main Themes of Latest General Assembly Dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect

Want a quick overview of the major themes and highlights of last week's General Assembly discussion on RtoP? Check out the ICRtoP's latest [infographic](#) above for quick numbers on how many states called for a GA resolution on RtoP; supported efforts for the Security Council to not block resolutions on atrocity situations; and more.

For a more complete look at last week's GA discussion, read our [full summary here](#) .

Catch up on developments in...

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Burma/Myanmar:

The Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR) [launched](#) an anti-hate speech initiative for Burma that will monitor and report on hate speech, while promoting public debate and tolerance. International Crisis Group [reported](#) that the nationwide ceasefire remains elusive while campaigns for the November elections have already begun.

Burundi:

UN Special Rapporteur on Truth, Justice and Reparations, Pablo de Greiff, [conveyed](#) that the failure of the international community to immediately intervene in Burundi could result in “new mass atrocities” and lead to a larger regional war with impossible implications. He also noted that the UN Human Rights Council is working on a Burundi resolution, led by the European Union and a few African states.

Central African Republic:

The UN [reported](#) that a civilian MINUSCA employee is suspected of sexual exploitation, and that they are undertaking an investigation. This brings the total number of alleged sexual abuse cases to 17.

Amnesty International [advocated](#) that credibility will only be restored to UN Peacekeeping in CAR if those who committed sexual violence are brought to justice, noting that sexual misconduct by UN peacekeepers threatens the integrity of the entire United Nations system.

Watchlist [reported](#) that both ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka militias have attacked numerous schools throughout CAR and pressed international peacekeeping forces to do more to protect children’s right to education.

Democratic Republic of the Congo:

Seven senior political figures were [expelled](#) from the DRC's ruling party after they signed a letter urging President Joseph Kabila to relinquish power when his term expires next year and to take immediate steps to ensure a presidential election scheduled for November 2016 happens on schedule. If the election goes ahead, it would mark the first peaceful transition of power in the history of the DRC.

Gaza:

Several hundred Palestinians [demonstrated](#) in Rafah last Saturday against increasing power cuts stemming from deterioration in electricity lines from Egypt, leaving residents of Gaza with four to six hours of electricity supply per day.

The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, [briefed](#) the Security Council and noted his grave concern over the violence and continuing clashes in and around the holy sites of the Old City of Jerusalem, stating that the provocations have the potential to ignite violence far beyond the city.

Iraq:

Turkish warplanes [bombed](#) Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) targets in northern Iraq on Friday, thereby continuing to undermine the Kurdish-Turkey ceasefire.

ISIL [claimed](#) responsibility for two suicide bombs in Baghdad that killed at least 23 people and wounded more than 60 at police checkpoints in the Wathba and Haraj markets. An additional blast occurred in Bab al-Muadham district, killing four, but no claims of responsibility for the attack have been made.

Kenya:

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights [reported](#) that Kenyan security forces have carried out 25 extrajudicial killings and 81 enforced disappearances in the last two years as part of a crackdown on militants. The report of the Commission additionally expressed concern that ethnic Somalis and Muslims were being disproportionately targeted.

After the ICC issued arrest warrants against Paul Gicheru and Philip Kipkoech Bett - who are

alleged to be Kenyan journalist Barasa's accomplices in corrupting witnesses in the case against Deputy President William Ruto - Barasa for the first time [signaled](#) that he may surrender to the court.

Libya:

On Monday, Bernardino Leon, UN Special Envoy for Libya, [announced](#) that both the House of Representatives (HoR) and the General National Congress (GNC) governments had made compromises in order to overcome longstanding differences and that he is confident a final political agreement can be reached by the September 20th deadline. However, the next day, the HoR [rejected](#) amendments submitted by the GNC to the National Unity Plan. The HoR were particularly opposed to two main

[amendments](#)

: First, that the proposed 120-member State Council be composed entirely of sitting members of the GNC; and second, that the Libyan military and security forces be built by the Unity Government, which would leave out the HoR National Army commander General Khalifa Heftar. After the stall, Bernardino Leon

[called](#)

on rival governments to return to the negotiating table of peace talks in Skhirat.

The UNSC [extended](#) the mandate of UNSMIL until March 2016, emphasizing that there can be no military solution. The Council also condemned the use of violence against civilians and institutions, calling for those responsible to be held accountable.

Mali:

In a fresh violation of a UN-brokered peace deal, fighting [erupted](#) near the Algerian border between the Coordination for Azawad Movements (CMA) and the Platform armed groups.

Nigeria:

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs [condemned](#) last Friday's suicide bombing on the Malkohi IDP camp in Yola, which killed at least 7 people and injured 14.

The spokesman for the Nigerian military [reported](#) that the new counter-terrorism strategies have yielded the surrender of "scores" of Boko Haram militants, and that Boko Haram has been "sufficiently weakened." The Nigerian military

[recaptured](#)

Gamboru Ngala, a border town with Cameroon, that Boko Haram used as a stronghold to

launch attacks in both Nigeria and Cameroon. Nigeria's army also [announced](#) that they rescued a dozen kidnapped women and children that were being held captive by Boko Haram. President Buhari has reportedly been [engaged](#) in talks with Boko Haram over the 219 girls abducted in April 2014 from a school in Chibok. French President Francois Hollande [pledged](#) that his administration will support and provide assistance to Nigeria to tackle insurgency and extremism in the country.

Nigeria [concluded](#) their Violence Against Women (VAC) survey and was commended by UNSG Ban Ki-moon for being the first West Africa country to do so. The survey [found](#) that 6 out of 10 Nigerian children experience some form of violence and 1 out of 4 girls suffer sexual violence.

South Sudan:

An attempt to adopt sanctions (an arms embargo and assets freeze) against two additional belligerents by the UN Security Council was [blocked](#) by Russia and Angola. Angola reportedly wished to give the two sides more time to implement the new peace deal, while Russia expressed concern that new sanctions would aggravate the situation. IGAD mediators [announced](#) that their monitors had witnessed the South Sudanese government carry out a helicopter gunship attack on rebel positions only days after signing the peace deal.

A consortium of aid groups operating in South Sudan [reported](#) that aid workers have been attacked, including with acts of murder and rape, with increasing frequency.

Sri Lanka:

The new government of Sri Lanka [announced](#) a plan to the UN Human Rights Council for a truth, justice and reconciliation commission and a new constitution to stabilize the country and address remaining grievances following the decades-long civil war. However, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights called for the government to set up a special court to investigate the "horrific" abuses committed by both sides during the civil war. The strong recommendation was presented alongside the [OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka](#) that asserts that war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed.

On Thursday, September 17 2005, Adama Dieng, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on

the Prevention of Genocide, and Jennifer Welsh, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect, [released](#) a statement which called for the establishment of credible accountability and reconciliation mechanisms for Sri Lanka.

Sudan/Darfur:

The Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella group of rebels, [announced](#) its willingness to sign a six-month cessation of hostilities with Khartoum. The SRF emphasized the cessation was for the purposes of protecting civilians, allowing uninterrupted humanitarian assistance, and creating a more healthy atmosphere for peace processes. The Sudanese president has announced recently his readiness for a two-month ceasefire in the Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Darfur regions. At the opening of the Human Rights Council, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [expressed](#) concern over the high level of impunity towards severe human rights violations in Sudan, especially in Darfur, Blue Nile, and South Kordofan.

An African Union (AU) commission [tasked](#) with investigating the activities of the Ugandan Lord resistance (LRA) arrived in Khartoum. Sudan has been long accused of harboring and supporting the LRA rebels.

Syria:

A US official [stated](#) his government's belief that ISIL is making and using chemical weapons in Iraq and Syria, saying that the US has identified at least four occasions on both sides of the Iraq-Syria border where ISIL has used mustard agents. The UN [announced](#) that senior disarmament official Virginia Gamba will lead the Joint Investigative Mechanism in Syria in order to determine who was responsible for earlier chemical weapons attacks. The Security Council approved the investigation last week, which will be a joint inquiry by the UN and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien [urged](#) the Security Council to find a political solution to end the conflict in Syria, warning members that the war had created one of the largest refugee exoduses since the Second World War. Mr. O'Brien also explained that, 18 months after the adoption of resolution 2139 on allowing unhindered humanitarian access to Syria, parties had disregarded the resolution and humanitarian aid has been unable to reach civilians in need.

Russia [positioned](#) about a half a dozen tanks at an airfield south of Latakia as part of a military buildup in Syria. Russian President Vladimir Putin [defended](#) delivering military assistance to the Syrian regime, describing it as aid for a government fighting "terrorist aggression". The top US commander in the Middle East Gen. Lloyd Austin

[admitted](#)

on Wednesday that only four or five US-trained Syrian fighters remain on the battlefield against ISIL and acknowledged that the US would not reach its goal of training 5,000 soldiers in the near term. French defense minister Jean-Yves Le Drian

[announced](#)

that France will soon join the coalition of Western and Middle Eastern countries carrying out airstrikes against ISIL in Syria.

Yemen

Last Friday, rocket fire from the Houthi rebels [killed](#) 20 civilians and wounded dozens more in a busy market. Meanwhile, the Saudi-led coalition sent reinforcements into Yemen in preparation to retake the capital Sana'a, seized by the Houthi insurgents a year ago. As part of the assault on Sana'a, coalition warplanes struck an arms depot and killed at least seven civilians and wounded 10. On Saturday, the Saudi-led coalition

[launched](#)

additional airstrikes killing at least 16 Yemeni civilians, including ten people from a single family.

The Yemeni government [abandoned](#) UN-mediated peace talks with the Houthis, which were set to start this week. Yemen's Prime Minister Khaled Bahah and several government ministers

[returned](#)

to Yemen after months spent in exile in Saudi Arabia, and plan to stay in recently reclaimed Aden.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Monday [called](#) for an independent inquiry into human rights violations committed in Yemen by both the Saudi-led coalition and Houthi rebels. ICRtoP member Human Rights Watch

[argued](#)

that the international community must urgently take steps to hold to account the actors committing mass atrocities in Yemen's civil war.

The UN Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect [rele](#)
[ased](#)

a statement on the situation in Yemen, expressing their concern at the "virtual silence" of the international community and the increasing impact of the conflict on civilians. They stated their belief that violence will only escalate if there is not a "serious commitment" of the parties to finding a political solution to the conflict.

What else is new?

Human Rights Watch [reported](#) that the EU has been deflecting its responsibility to protect refugees by failing to agree on a proposal for mandatory distribution of asylum seekers inside

the EU.

The UN Secretary-General [announced](#) that he will hold a high-level meeting on the refugee crisis during the General Assembly at the end of September in order to mobilize a “humane, effective and rights-based response” to a global crisis that has seen 60 million people flee their homes.