

## Security Council holds thirteenth open debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict

On 25 June 2012, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) held its thirteenth [open debate](#)

on

the

### [Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict \(POC\)](#)

. A thematic issue on the UNSC agenda since 1999, POC focuses on the duties of states and the role of the UNSC in addressing the needs of vulnerable populations including refugees, internally displaced persons, women and children. During this debate, Council Members were joined by other governments -45 Member States participated in total- as well as  UN Secretary-General (UNSG)

### [Ban Ki-moon](#)

, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

### [Valerie Amos](#)

, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights

### [Ivan Šimonović](#)

, and Director for International Law and Cooperation at the International Committee of the Red Cross

### [Philip Spoerri](#)

. Participants addressed the POC normative framework as well as relevant country cases, including those of Syria, Mali, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Libya. Speakers looked in particular at challenges to protection articulated in the

### [June 2012 report on POC from the UNSG](#)

, namely, enhanced compliance of disputing parties with international humanitarian and human rights law; consistent and effective engagement with non-state armed groups in order to improve compliance with the law; strengthened protection by United Nations (UN) peacekeeping and other relevant missions; improved humanitarian access; and the promotion of accountability for violations. Participants touched on a range of available tools for protection as well as the crucial role of actors at all levels. The

### [UNSG](#)

noted the importance of peacekeepers, governments and local institutions in fulfilling the “fundamental responsibility to protect”.

### [Šimonović](#)

, speaking on behalf of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Navi Pillay, reminded, “It

is our responsibility to protect the lives of civilians using every tool available to us.”

### [See full statements from the debate.](#)

Read the United Nations [summary](#) of the debate.

For more information on the POC framework and its relationship with RtoP, read the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect’s [policy brief](#) . The Global Centre has provided [excerpts](#) of

selected statements.□

***Statements delivered at the thirteenth open-debate in the UN Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict***

[United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon](#)

[UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valer](#)

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[UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović](#)

[Director for International Law and Cooperation at the International Committee of the Red](#)

[Cross Philip Spoerri](#)

[Armenia](#)

[Brazil](#)

[Chile \(in&#160;Spanish\)](#)

[European&#160;Union](#)

[Germany](#)

[Guatemala](#)

[India](#)

[Iran](#)

[Libya \(in&#160;Arabic\)](#)

[Nordic Countries](#)

[Russia](#)

[South Africa](#)

[Sri Lanka](#)

[United Kingdom](#)

[Unites States](#)

[Venezuela](#)