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I. ICRtoP welcomes three new members: IKV Pax Christi, E.O.NE.P.E., and Vision-Gram International *The*

International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) is pleased to welcome three new Coalition Members, IKV Pax Christi, the Scientific Association of Young Political Scientists (E.O.NE.P.E.), and Vision-Gram International

Read below about how these organizations are working to prevent and respond to genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing worldwide.

1 [. IKV Pax Christi](#) (Utrecht, the Netherlands)

IKV Pax Christi is dedicated to linking civilians from different nations under a mission of peace, justice and reconciliation, and operates in fifteen countries throughout Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, South Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Its programmatic initiatives vary depending on the region in focus and include an emphasis on

[nuclear disarmament](#)

, enhancing security and

[protection of civilians](#)

, conducting research, or assisting to strengthen the local capacities in peacebuilding post-conflict. Recent examples of IKV Pax Christi's work include co-hosting a

[workshop](#)

in December 2012 for NGOs, think-tanks, European institutions, and Syrian citizens to discuss the Responsibility to Protect norm in the context of the case of Syria, focusing on actions that could be taken by the European Union. The organization

also participated in an event in South Sudan in February 2013, in partnership with the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms, for security sector, government, UN, and local governing and civil society representatives to address the contribution of regular information sharing to civilian protection strategies.

2.

[Scientific Association of Young Political Scientists \(E.O.NE.P.E.\) \(Athens, Greece\)](#)

Established in 2008, E.O.NE.P.E. is a Greece-wide academic association that conducts research on various topics in the fields of political science and economics. Research is carried out through the organization's Scientific Committees, and the findings are then published on the Association's website and in their magazine, which is distributed to national and international academic institutions. In addition, the organization holds

[conferences](#)

on various related topics, such as the Treaty of Lisbon and Eurozone stimulation. E.O.NE.P.E. formally endorsed the Responsibility to Protect at a meeting of the organization's Board in September 2011, and established a Scientific Committee to specifically focus on RtoP. This Committee is tasked with conducting research on the norm and issues related to the prevention of mass atrocities. The organization will feature reports and upcoming events developed by the RtoP Committee on E.O.NE.P.E.'s website in both English and Greek to raise awareness of the norm.

3.

[Vision-Gram International](#)

(Ottawa, Canada; South Kivu, DRC)

Established in 1996, Vision-Gram International is a human rights organization that focuses on improving socio-economic conditions for vulnerable populations in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. Vision-Gram International's programs focus on the prevention of the conscription of child soldiers and reintegration of former child soldiers into society, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and the fight against impunity for human rights violations. The organization works in particular to defend the rights of

[women and children](#)

, through education initiatives on peace and human rights in the countries in which it works. Vision-Gram International's DRC-based team works directly with youth, including former child soldiers, to provide the training and support necessary to empower the population and reintegrate them into society. Past work has included events in December 2012 at the University of Ottawa on the challenges in the

[Great Lakes](#)

Region of Africa on reintegrating

[child soldiers](#)

and in April 2012 on the Arms Trade Treaty, also in Ottawa, to discuss with students the implications of arms transfers for the recruitment of child soldiers.

Read more information about ICRtoP's

[52 Members](#)

and visit our

[Join the Coalition Page](#)

for further information on how your organization can become a part of ICRtoP as either a Member or NGO Supporter. We encourage you to reach out to these groups for their expertise and partnership. ICRtoP will feature their RtoP-related work under Latest from the Coalition on our

[website](#)

II. Independent

task force publishes new report evaluating European Union capacity to prevent mass atrocities

The

[Budapest Centre for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities](#)

established the

[Task Force on the EU Prevention of Mass Atrocities](#)

in late 2011 to review the capabilities of the European Union to respond to threats of mass atrocities and publish a report on the findings. The aim of the review was to “support ongoing activities of the European Union and its Member States

regarding the implementation of the responsibility to protect, explore the potentials for more coherence and better cooperation, and develop practical policy recommendations.” The Task Force is chaired by Professor Christoph O. Meyer (King’s College London) and Professor Karen E. Smith (London School of Economics) and made up of European academics, experts and practitioners. The Report of the Task Force, entitled

“
[*The EU and the Prevention of Mass Atrocities: At Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses*](#)

”, was launched on 4 March 2013, and the Budapest Centre has planned several events in European cities, in partnership with other NGOs and academic institutions, to present the findings of the report in the coming weeks. See below to access the report and read more about upcoming events.

1. Report of the Task Force: The EU and the Prevention of Mass Atrocities: An Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses

4 March 2013

(...) The EU has considerable strengths in each of the three broad areas of warning, prevention and response. At the same time, the Task Force has identified four core problems impeding the ability of the EU and its member states to prevent mass atrocities:

- Mass atrocity prevention is rarely mentioned in core EU documents and by EU actors, despite EU commitments to protect and promote human rights and despite its support for R2P.
- Integrating a preventative mindset into EU foreign policy-making is a challenge, given the dominant focus on crisis management, especially within the Council.
- Efforts to strengthen conflict prevention and human rights policies need to include a distinct mass atrocity lens in intelligence, policy-making and planning capacities.
- There are problems of coordination within the EU,

as well as an underused potential for collaboration with local and international partners.

To address these four core problems and subsidiary shortcomings identified in the chapters below, the Task Force puts forward the following recommendations:

1. The EU should make explicit its commitment to preventing mass atrocities and thus match the strong normative commitment it has made to promoting human rights and preventing conflict.
2. The EU should cultivate expertise in the area of mass atrocity prevention and warning to enable it to prioritise effectively and focus on the countries and regions where these are most needed.
3. The EU's warning-response system should be strengthened to improve early action against long and short-term mass atrocity risks.
4. The EU should build on its strengths in structural

and direct prevention by employing a mass atrocity lens across the spectrum of relevant activities, including its trade and development policies.

5. The EU's capabilities to react quickly to mass atrocities should be improved by better contingency planning for situations of imminent and/or ongoing mass atrocities which have not been identified earlier or where structural prevention has failed.

6. The EU should cooperate more closely with other actors to prevent mass atrocities. (...)

See the full report

[here](#)

2.

Upcoming events: Presentation of Task Force Report at the European Parliament in Brussels, at United Nations Headquarters in Geneva, and at the London School of Economics

On 7 March 2013, the Budapest Centre for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities will present the findings of the Report of the Task Force to the European Parliament during an event in Brussels, Belgium, entitled “
[*Remembering in the Future: Policies and practices of remembrance to prevent mass atrocities*](#)
”. In addition to the EU Task Force for the Prevention of Mass Atrocities, participants will include Mr. Adama Dieng, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, as well as representatives of the European Parliament, European Commission, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the United Nations.

The following day, the Permanent Missions of Ethiopia, Hungary, and the United States and the Delegation of the European Union, in cooperation with the Budapest Centre, will host a second launch, entitled “
[*Prevention of Mass Atrocities: Regional Perspectives*](#)
”, at the Palais des Nations at UN Headquarters in

Geneva.

The event will feature a panel discussion with representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Canada (as Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Task Force), Nigeria, and the United States focusing on political challenges for capacity-building and promoting international cooperation in mass atrocities prevention.

On 26 March, the Report will be presented during a public lecture of the London School of Economics (LSE) Department of International Relations entitled, “

[Prevention of Mass Atrocities: Can the EU do Better?](#)

”

The event will be chaired by Professor Karen E. Smith (LSE), one of the co-Chairs of the Task Force, and feature a panel discussion with James Kearney (UN Association of the UK) and Dr. James Smith (The Aegis Trust).

III. African Union signs Agreement with Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation to establish the African Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

21 February 2013

(...) The African Union yesterday in Addis Ababa signed an agreement with the nonprofit Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation to create the African Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention, marking a historic step forward in the continent's commitment to prevent atrocities and build a peaceful and prosperous future.(...)

The creation of a continent-wide intergovernmental network is intended to address the twin bugbears of accountability and political will that have plagued efforts to ensure states' responsiveness to genocide and other atrocity crimes.

In the short term, the initiative provides for: financial and technical support for the undertaking of national initiatives to prevent genocide and mass atrocities throughout the African continent an education and training program for state and AU Commission officials, conceived and delivered by the Auschwitz Institute with the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission to address the region's specific needs for prevention development of a genocide and mass atrocity prevention curriculum for AU member states to incorporate into their training of national civil servants.

In the long term, the initiative envisions the creation of regional and sub-regional mechanisms of inter-governmental coordination on early prevention, and support for those mechanisms that already exist the fostering of sustainable leadership on genocide and mass atrocity prevention in member-state governments.

Given the damaging legacy of failure to prevent

mass atrocities in Africa, and the incredibly high stakes — in terms of impact on economies, the environment, and human lives — the Auschwitz Institute insists on the following principle as paramount in creating the network and ensuring its success: Effective prevention of genocide and mass atrocities is developed and sustained from within a society, so initiatives must originate locally and be locally directed.(...)

Even before the norm known as the Responsibility to Protect, Article 4 of the African Union's Constitutive Act of 2000 set forth what is sometimes referred to as the principle of non-indifference: "the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity."

See the full press release
[here](#)

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IV. Publications related to ongoing and potential situations of mass atrocity crimes

1. Mali: Women's rights must be at the core of the transition

International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH)

6 March 2013

On the eve of International Women's Day, FIDH joins human rights and women's rights organisations in Mali and the Coalition of the Campaign "Africa for Women's Rights: Ratify and respect!" to call for the full participation of women and the protection of their rights to be at the centre of the process towards peace and democracy in Mali.

During the conflict that has ravaged Northern Mali for over a year, women and girls have been

particular targets of violence: rape and other forms of sexual violence, forced marriage, sometimes to several men, public floggings, and beatings as punishment for “immoral acts”. Islamist armed groups occupying the region focussed attacks on the status of women, preventing girls from going to school, preventing women from working and moving freely in public spaces, obliging women to wear the veil... Thousands of women and children are among those who fled the violence and who now find themselves displaced within the country or across its borders.

Today, our organisations pay tribute to the combat of the Malian people who have struggled for democracy and equality and against obscurantism and who have rejected the imposition of measures violating women’s rights. We underline that the future must be built with the full participation of women in all efforts aimed at establishing a society based on dignity, justice and equality.

Justice is a priority. Durable peace cannot be achieved without justice for the victims. Those responsible for crimes against the civilian population

must be prosecuted in conformity with international standards. There must be no impunity for crimes of violence against women, in accordance with victims' right to justice and reparation and to deter the commission of future crimes. Our organisations underline that rape and other forms of sexual violence can be qualified as crimes against humanity and war crimes under the Statute of the International Criminal Court, which in January 2013 opened an investigation into crimes committed in Mali since January 2012. As affirmed in UN Security Council Resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1889, there must be no amnesties for the perpetrators of crimes of sexual violence. We call on the Malian authorities, with the support of the international community, to ensure that victims have access to legal, medical and psycho-social support.

We also call on the Malian authorities and the international community to guarantee the effective participation of women in the peace process, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2085 (authorising the deployment of an international mission in Mali), as well as Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Full representation of

women in the new political bodies, including the forthcoming Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation and the National Commission on Negotiation, must be ensured. We also call for the “Roadmap for the transition”, recently adopted by the Malian government, which currently contains no mention of women’s rights, to be amended into order to integrate these obligations.

The future of Mali must be built on the foundations of respect for human rights, in accordance with the Constitution and international and regional obligations. **Read [full article](#). 2. Briefing paper - The Responsibility to Protect in Mali: Benchmarks for effective Canadian policy**

World Federalist Movement – Canada

25 February 2013

(...)

The responsibility to protect (R2P) is an emerging international norm that guides policy and actions to

shield populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Public attention is often focused on the most controversial aspects of the R2P norm (i.e. those “pillar three” interventions that also involve use of force). However, it is R2P’s pillar two, i.e. the responsibility of the international community to assist the national government, that has been invoked by the United Nations Security Council with respect to the international community’s involvement in Mali.

The United Nations is developing a comprehensive program to assist the political transition process in Mali. Also, at the UN Security Council there is recognition that additional decisions will be required to determine the configuration of future peace operations, following the creation of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). (...)

Benchmarks for effective Canadian engagement therefore include support for:

- Restoration of the constitutional order and holding of elections;
- Dialogue and reconciliation with legitimate representatives of the populations of northern Mali;
- Reform of the Malian army and security forces;
- Strengthened mechanisms to restore the rule of law and respect for human rights;
- Financial support for the African Union and ECOWAS (the Economic Community of West African States). (...)

See the full paper

[here](#)

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3. Hope for an End to the World's Deadliest War

John Prendergast

CNN

22 February 2013

(...) On Sunday, the Democratic Republic of Congo and other African states are due to sign a framework agreement that aims to build a foundation for regional peace.

That so many African states -- along with the United Nations, African Union, European Union and United States -- are uniting in an effort to address the roots of conflict in Congo is an encouraging development. The signing of this framework deal doesn't end the war in Congo, but rather it provides a starting point for a global effort to try to end finally the world's deadliest conflict.

Four important changes are under way in Congo today, giving this initiative a better chance than its predecessors. First, for decades all of the benefits of eastern Congo's vast mineral resource wealth

have gone to those with the biggest guns (PDF) -- the Congolese army, local militias or neighboring countries. These minerals include, among others, gold, cobalt, copper, tin, industrial diamonds and coltan, used in cell phones, laptops and other electronic devices.

But U.S. and European consumer demands for a conflict-free minerals trade, congressional legislation, International Monetary Fund aid suspensions, U.N. experts' reports, responsible investors and other influential voices are making it harder to profit violently and illegally from mineral smuggling.

Second, regional support for armed groups inside eastern Congo has been a staple of the ongoing cycle of war there for years. For the first time, the international community is imposing meaningful consequences for evidence of cross-border weapons supply. Rwanda strenuously denies involvement, but

some donors have suspended aid programs to that nation and will continue to do so until the evidence shifts toward solutions.

Third, until recently, accountability for war crimes wasn't part of the discussion despite some of the worst crimes against humanity being committed globally since World War II. But calls for international justice have intensified inside Congo and beyond, and accused war criminals are beginning to face sanctions.

Fourth, calls for the reform of a U.N. peacekeeping mission that costs more than \$1 billion are increasing. Refocusing the mission on eradicating the worst armed groups, demobilizing rank-and-file combatants and helping to reform Congo's army would go much further than the present mandate. Africa has pledged 4,000 new combat troops to deal with

the worst militias, and change can start with them.(...)

A soon-to-be-named U.N. "super envoy" should help construct a comprehensive peace process for Congo and its neighbors, building on the upcoming framework. (...) Two tracks seem necessary. One would involve an impartially facilitated national dialogue to address internal Congolese issues such as army and justice reform, decentralization, electoral frameworks, immigration, minority protections, land dispute adjudication, mining codes and other divisive issues. The other would be a regional process in which Congo and its neighbors could address shared security threats and negotiate cooperative investment and infrastructure arrangements that could ignite a real economic boom for Central Africa.(...)

See the full article

[here](#)

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Read an article from the Enough Project discussing the Congo Framework Agreement

[here](#)

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4. Does the lesson from Syria imply it is better to save no one?

Kyle Matthews

The Globe and Mail

20 February 2013

When NATO enforced UN Security Council Resolution 1973 by establishing a no-fly zone to halt Moammar Gadhafi's regime from attacking

the city of Benghazi, many critics voiced opposition. Their logic seemed to be that since the international community could not intervene everywhere that mass atrocities were looming, it should not bother trying at all.(...)

Fast-forward a few years. After 12 months of inaction on the part of the international community in the face of atrocities carried out by religious zealots in the northern part of Mali, France intervened militarily and liberated the cities of Timbuktu, Gao, and Kidal. That French President François Hollande answered Bamako's plea for outside assistance, which was fully supported by all countries in West Africa, as well as the African Union, has been perceived by some as ill-intentioned. In a Globe op-ed, Gerald Caplan warned that we should be wary of supporting France. Rather than directing hostility at those non-state actors hacking off the limbs of civilians in Timbuktu, Mr. Caplan focuses on the fact that both Paris

and Washington “have been long-time proponents of R2P – the Right to Plunder.”

R2P, which actually stands for the “responsibility to protect,” is a political commitment made by all 192 governments seated at the UN in 2005 to break the cycle of standing idle when mass atrocities (genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing) are occurring or about to occur. The African architects of R2P, South Sudanese scholar and diplomat Francis Deng and former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, might disagree with Mr. Caplan’s reading of the situation in Mali and the assertion that R2P is a cover to advance the interests of mining firms in the West.

Western countries have pretty much stood on the sidelines of the Syrian crisis. On one side, we have witnessed Russia and China using

their veto power a total of three times within the UN Security Council to protect Assad's regime, while Iran continues to provide direct military aid to Damascus. On the other side, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Turkey have shipped arms and facilitated the movement of jihadists into Syria with the hopes of toppling the government.

With more than 60,000 civilian deaths and millions displaced so far, it is understandable that so many remain skeptical that anything can actually be done to halt atrocities and protect civilians. It would be a mistake to lose sight of the progress that has been made.(...)

While the “power of witness” has usually resided with journalists and the news media, the digital media revolution and new technologies now enable NGOs and individual citizens to capture evidence and track who is

committing atrocities, as well as what individuals or governments are enabling these crimes. Syria demonstrates how evidence of atrocities can be captured, recorded, and shared with the international community via social media. Conspiracies of silence appear to be becoming a thing of the past.

George Clooney's Satellite Sentinel Project is spearheading outside-the-box thinking in its use of technologies that just a few decades ago were the private domain of a select group of powerful countries. Using the services of DigitalGlobe, a company that sells digital satellite imagery, it monitors the border between Sudan and South Sudan, recording and analyzing images of the movement of military aircraft and troops, burning villages, and mass graves.

The global fight to combat mass-atrocity crimes

is marked by more failures than successes, but real progress is being made. While we might never be able to halt all atrocities, in the years ahead it will increasingly become more difficult for governments and non-state actors to literally get away with murder. (...)

See the full article
[here](#)

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V. Publications, interviews and events related to RtoP

1. Compilation of essays: Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: New Directions for International Peace and Security?

IGRAPÈ Institute

March 2013

(...) This publication considers the evolving discussion on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the Responsibility While Protecting (RwP). It features 12 papers by a diverse collection of military personnel, scholars and humanitarian experts from Brazil and abroad. Although focused primarily on the Brazilian perspective, it touches on issues striking the heart of international peace and security, such as state sovereignty, humanitarian intervention, the protection of civilians and peace-keeping operations. Indeed, the concepts of R2P and RwP are connected to twenty first century thinking on the very nature of the international state system and issues of global governance.

In bringing together professionals from across multiple disciplines, it is hardly surprising that there are areas of both convergence and

divergence. One area where all authors agree is that R2P and RwP are ultimately highly political processes, even if they have significant technical implications. In making their contributions, all the authors also acknowledge that this edited volume represents the opening, rather than the closing, of a complex debate. Indeed, owing to generous support from Norway, the present edited discussion paper represents the first scholarly treatment of R2P and RwP in Brazil by Brazilians.(...)

The authors agree without exception that prevention is at the core of R2P and RwP, and must remain so. There are underlying legal, moral and ethical imperatives in promoting prevention embedded throughout the principles of R2P and accompanying concepts. In short, R2P advocates the right for prevention and not the right for intervention. It is a reformulation of sovereignty as responsibility. The authors all also acknowledge the necessary challenges

and limits of using force to achieve peace and liberal outcomes. (...)

The edited volume focuses not just on the norms and principles shaping R2P and RwP, but also practical issues associated with their implementation. Credible and legitimate peacekeeping and R2P operations depend on effective implementation. On the one hand, field personnel must render distinctions between tactical and strategic protection and assume risks in the short-term for improvement in the long-term. But to do this, they need clear and unambiguous instruction from above. On the other hand, effective implementation requires credible institutions, including the growing engagement of “southern” partners on the ground. (...)

Notwithstanding great enthusiasm about the promise of R2P and RwP, there are also

concerns about its future. Indeed, there are major reservations about the direction of the concept - in particular its politicization and instrumentalization - in the wake of NATO-led intervention in Libya. Some authors are skeptical about the intentions of certain proponents of R2P, but also worry that interventions to “protect civilians” from mass atrocities may in fact have generated new forms of suffering and discontent. Similar concerns emerged in relation to hard military style interventions in Cote D’Ivoire and also the debate around what to do in Syria. At a more prosaic level, there are also some anxieties about the future of R2P and RwP as concepts. For example, there are concerns that Brazil itself has launched an important set of reflections on the limits on the use of force, but has not followed-through. Some fear that the dissenters are gaining ground, many of whom criticize R2P and RwP as a form of political manipulation, as trespassing on sovereignty, as a disproportionate act of force, as a new form of

colonialism, as reflecting UN Security Council illegitimacy, or worse. As a result, some authors in this edition feel that R2P is in fact more controversial than ever before.

See the full publication
[here](#)

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2.

**Brazil as a norm entrepreneur: the
“Responsibility While Protecting” initiative**

Thorsten Benner

Global Public Policy Institute

March 2013

(...)

The Responsibility While Protecting concept is one of the most promising initiatives to bridge the huge gaps in the global debate on the R2P.

It was an important discussion starter – and just when the discussion should have started to tackle the serious open questions, Brazil seems to have pulled the plug. Some of these open questions include how exactly the monitoring and accountability mechanisms in the Security Council can be conceived. In addition, there is the urgent need to develop the discussion on the use of force according to the third R2P pillar in order to better understand “how force can and should be used to protect civilians, and what kinds of operational tensions, legal dilemmas, and normative challenges arise from its use”.

Ensuring the implementation of R2P and RWP (in the sense of “doing the right thing, in the

right place, at the right time and for the right reasons” in the words of the latest SG report) requires “knowledge, understanding and careful reflection”. (The report does not dare use the term “intelligence” which is a sensitive term for many touchy UN member states.) Investing in the knowledge capacity of the “international community” (chiefly the UN) should be an urgent priority but is neglected or even undermined by member states. In this context, Brazil could have used the RWP discussion to move forward debates on, for instance, the UN using intelligence from drones to better assess situations. These are discussions that have so far been mired in predictable ideological controversy.

However, given its reluctance to further push, the concept’s future hangs in the balance. Other countries such as Germany and the whole EU would be well advised to take up key elements of the concept and – in cooperation

with the IBSA countries – revive the global debate with new ideas.

This is all the more urgent in light of the international community's disastrous performance in the case of Syria. And both the West and Brazil should draw some broader lessons for global norm evolution from the RWP saga: Western capitals (and NGOs) should get used to the fact that they no longer hold a monopoly on norm entrepreneurship, and this should result in an openness to engage constructively with proposals on key global norms emanating from outside the West. With the writing of geopolitical transition clearly on the wall, Western countries should recognize their almost automatic reflex to the Brazilian initiative and pause for introspection. For its part, Brazil will hopefully conduct an internal review and conclude that engaging in global norm entrepreneurship on balance is a business worth pursuing and investing in

despite the inherent risks. The future of global governance depends on it. (...)

Read

[full brief](#)

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3. Interview with Naomi Kikoler of the Global Centre for R2P: European Powers and The Responsibility to Protect

The Agenda with Steve Paikin

27 February 2013

Naomi Kikoler, Director of Policy and Advocacy at the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, discusses the Responsibility to Protect on “The Agenda”.

(...) Its goal was to prevent crimes like genocide and ethnic cleansing. Eight years since the initiative was launched, how has the Responsibility to Protect doctrine worked around the world? Naomi Kikoler from the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect gives us an update on the doctrine, the challenge in enforcing it, and criticisms of its efficacy. (...)

Watch the interview

[here](#)

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4.

**Human Rights Council panel discussion
commemorating 20**

th

anniversary of the Vienna Declaration

25 February 2013

Below is an excerpt of the introduction in this collection of essays. Among other esteemed authors, one of the contributors, Patrick Quinton-Brown, is from the Canadian Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, an ICRtoP member.

On 25 February 2013, the Human Rights Council held a panel discussion to commemorate the 20

th

anniversary of the Vienna Declaration, a human rights declaration adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. Among other important clauses, the Vienna Declaration created the High Commission for Human Rights post.

During the event, opening statements were delivered by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (via video); High Commissioner for Human Rights

[Navi Pillay](#)

; State Secretary for European and International Affairs of Austria Reinhold Lopatka; Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Gennady Gatilov; and EU Special Representative for Human Rights Stavros Lambrinidis.

Following the opening statements, a panel of experts took the floor to discuss upholding accountability and preventing impunity at the international level for

mass atrocity crimes. Panelists included Mr.

[Adama Dieng](#)

, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General for the prevention of genocide and participant in the World Conference; Ms. Safak Pavey, Member of the Turkish Parliament and member of the Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities; Ms.

[Carla Del Ponte](#)

, former Prosecutor of United Nations international criminal law tribunals; Ms. Hina Jilani, human rights lawyer and participant in the World Conference; Mr. Albert Sasson, Special Advisor, Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme du Maroc and participant in the World Conference; and Mr.

[Gustavo Gallon](#)

, Director of the Colombian Commission of Jurists and participant in the World Conference.

Watch
[video](#)
of the event.

5. Four-Part Series on the Responsibility to Protect

Geoffrey Johnston

The Whig

Geoffrey Johnston, journalist at The

Whig wrote a series of four columns looking at how the “Responsibility to Protect” doctrine is – and is not – being applied in practice. Below are excerpts from the first column, entitled “The responsibility to protect?” with links to the full series below.

Despite a legal obligation to protect civilian populations, the United Nations has not intervened effectively in the ongoing civil war in Syria that has killed tens of thousands of civilians and displaced up to a million people. But this isn't the first time that the community of nations has shirked its responsibility to protect.

When a United Nations panel of experts concluded in 2011 that the world body had fallen short of its humanitarian and civilian protection mandates during the final months of the civil war in Sri Lanka, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon established an internal review panel to more closely examine that failure.(...)

R2P was adopted at the UN world leaders' summit in New York in September of 2005. According to Jennifer Welsh, a Canadian-born international relations expert at Oxford University, Martin “intervened personally during the laborious negotiations over the text of the 2005 summit outcome document, which endorsed R2P.”

Martin reached out to a number of world leaders, convincing them “to support Articles 138 and 139 of the summit outcome document, which acknowledged the responsibilities of individual states and the international community to protect populations from mass atrocity crimes,” Welsh said in an email.(...)

R2P is “designed to provide protection for people, not protection for nation-states or governments,” Axworthy explained in another interview. “It’s not national security; it’s people security.” (...)

To fully appreciate the significance of the human security agenda, an understanding of the concept of sovereignty is necessary.

The modern history of Europe and the wider international system was shaped by the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War. The treaty established the concept of national sovereignty, guaranteeing the independence and territorial rights of the nation-state. And that meant, Martin said, “a government could do whatever it wanted within its own territory.”(...)

According to Axworthy, R2P established “an alternative way” of viewing the world.

“Sovereignty is not a divine right so that you can have the right, as we see in Syria today, to murder your own people.”

Under R2P, “sovereignty is based upon the degree to which you protect your people,” Axworthy explained. “And if you don’t protect them, your sovereignty is clearly amended, or is really reduced.” However, R2P won’t create a “world government” or do away with national governments, he said.

R2P sets the bar high for UN intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states. According to Welsh, “the trigger for international action must be extreme emergencies, involving

crimes against humanity.”

Military intervention “should always be the last resort,” Allan Rock said in a telephone interview. Rock served as Canada’s ambassador to the United Nations during the Martin years and helped win approval for R2P at the UN.

All other options—sanctions, arms embargoes, no-fly zones and safe zones for refugees and internally displaced persons—should be exhausted before the UN authorizes the use of military force against a nation-state, he said.(...)

According to the report of the UN internal review panel, some senior UN staff “did not perceive the prevention of killing of civilians as their responsibility – and agency and department heads at UNHQ [UN headquarters] were not instructing them otherwise.”

Unless R2P is invoked wherever civilian populations face mass death, it will ultimately be remembered as an elegant but ephemeral concept.

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