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ICRtoP welcomes the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Welsh as the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect

On 12 July 2013, the Spokesperson for the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) announced that Dr. Jennifer Welsh from the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict at the University of Oxford has been appointed as Special Adviser to the UNSG on the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP). Dr. Welsh will be the second Special Adviser on RtoP, following

[Dr. Edward Luck](#)

who

[served](#)

in this role from February 2008 through July 2012.

[Dr. Welsh](#)

is currently a Professor of International Relations and Co-Director of the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict at the University of Oxford. Her research has focused on the evolution of RtoP within the international community, the ethics of post-conflict reconstruction, the authority of the UN Security Council and issues surrounding the concept of sovereignty. Dr. Welsh has a Masters and Doctorate from the University of Oxford, where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar and an Honors Bachelors of Arts from the University of Saskatchewan in Canada.

The mandate of the Special Adviser

In a 2007

[letter](#)

to the President of the United Nations Security Council and the 2010

[Report](#)

on “Early Warning, Assessment and the Responsibility to Protect”, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognized the need to further operationalize the RtoP norm through proposing the

creation of the position of the Special Advisor on the Responsibility to Protect. This position, [acknowledged](#) on 11 December 2007 by the Security Council, is part-time and at the level of Assistant Secretary-General. While distinct, the responsibilities of the Special Adviser on RtoP and the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, currently [Mr. Adama Dieng](#), are closely related. In a letter to the Security Council, dated 10 July 2013, the Secretary-General noted his intentions that, “Ms. Welsh will work under the overall guidance of Mr. Adama Dieng (...) to further the conceptual, political, institutional and operational development of the Responsibility to Protect.” Towards these ends, the Special Adviser on RtoP can engage with UN actors, Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations and civil society to implement RtoP; work to mainstream RtoP and atrocities prevention within the UN system; and conceptualize the UNSG’s annual reports on the norm and the subsequent informal, interactive dialogues held in the General Assembly. To facilitate the strong partnership between the two Special Advisers, the UNSG institutionalized their collaboration, and they now share, as much as possible, a common [methodology](#) to conduct early warning, assessments, and undertake advocacy efforts on the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing, as well as a joint office and staff.

ICRtoP looks forward to working with Dr. Welsh, Mr. Dieng, and the staff of the Office for Genocide Prevention and RtoP to consolidate support for the Responsibility to Protect and streamline action to prevent and respond to threats of mass atrocities. Towards these ends, we will continue our efforts with the Office to strengthen the relationship between civil society across the world and the UN system to further enhance collaboration, cooperation and information sharing on the prevention of and response to genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Read more about the [mandate](#) of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect and the [work](#) of the Joint Office. For more information, see the ICRtoP’s [page](#) on the Joint Office.