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The humanitarian disaster in Myanmar is a prime example of how the concept of "**responsibility to protect**"
(
R2P
) should be applied (Should The UN Invoke The '
Responsibility To Protect
'? - May 8).

When the Canadian government initiated the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty that gave life to **R2P**, it was based on the concept of human security which puts the protection of people at the forefront of the global agenda. The commission's mandate was never meant to be exclusive to one kind of threat. Human security applies to situations like natural disasters, pandemics and civil conflict.

Under **R2P**, when states are unwilling or unable to fulfill their most basic **responsibility to protect** their citizens, the international community must assume that role.

Myanmar's ruling military is actively impeding the timely arrival of assistance and medicines to more than one million people. What is the moral distinction between closing the door of rescuing people from death by machete and closing the door of life-saving aid?

Ramesh Thakur dangerously exaggerates the notion that implementing **R2P** means military intervention. **R2P's** chief goal is to use a variety of diplomatic forms of persuasion and influence to prevent or react to a humanitarian atrocity or catastrophe.

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