

UQ News  
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UQ's Asia-Pacific Centre for the **Responsibility to Protect** (APR2P Centre) has been closely monitoring international debates surrounding the Burmese and international response to the crisis in the Irrawaddy Delta.

(...) Professor Alex Bellamy [ , who is Director of the APR2P Centre at UQ and Professor in the School of Political Science and International Studies,] said that central to the response by concerned governments and commentators had been the request to invoke what the UN recently came to define as the "**Responsibility to Protect**".

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(...) "While moral outrage is an appropriate response to the tragically ineffective manner in which the authorities in Myanmar/Burma have addressed the humanitarian crisis in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, coopting the **Responsibility to Protect** to justify coercive aid disbursements is not," he said.

A major new Briefing Report released by the Centre on May 16 asserted that the **Responsibility to Protect**

does not apply at this stage to the devastation in Burma/Myanmar, because the principle does not mean protecting people from all imaginable threats.

(...) "In international law, crimes against humanity are defined as widespread or systematic attacks directed against civilians."

Professor Bellamy said the Centre's position was that: "although the Burmese government's response has been deplorable, there is no indication at present that it has committed such violations."

The Asia-Pacific Centre for the **Responsibility to Protect** is a bold new initiative. Launched in February in Bangkok, the Asia-Pacific Centre for the

### **Responsibility to Protect**

aims to become a focal point for bringing together politicians, NGOs, government agencies, and academics to develop peace keeping and early intervention initiatives with an Asian focus.

In keeping with the Centre's aims the Briefing Report was circulated to key stakeholders throughout the region including politicians, governments, NGOs and academics. The Report detailed four possible courses of action, including the option of ASEAN coordinating multilateral efforts and that concerned governments should support ASEAN's disaster relief teams. (...)

For more information, please refer to:

<http://www.uq.edu.au/news/index.html?article=14778>

APR2P Centre Briefing Report, 'Burma Requires Urgent Response but R2P not Appropriate' is

available at:

[http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/featured\\_reports/1662](http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/featured_reports/1662)