

R2PCS Listserv

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Responsibility to Protect Engaging Civil Society

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In this issue: [Ban Ki-moon supports operationalization of R2P, Poll shows strong worldwide support for R2P, R2P in the News]

I. Ban Ki-moon on R2P

ON ANNIVERSARY OF RWANDA GENOCIDE, SECRETARY-GENERAL SAYS CURRENT CHALLENGE IS TO MAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT OPERATIONAL

II. Worldpublicopinion.org Poll on R2P

1. PUBLICS AROUND THE WORLD SAY UN HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT AGAINST GENOCIDE

2. A RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT: THE WORLDS VIEW

III. R2P in the News

1. A LIFELINE FOR THE BURMESE

2. Fleeing the Janjaweed: a people brutalised and betrayed

3. THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

I. Ban Ki-moon on R2P

1. ON ANNIVERSARY OF RWANDA GENOCIDE, SECRETARY-GENERAL SAYS CURRENT

CHALLENGE IS TO MAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT OPERATIONAL

Department of Public Information

5 April 2007

Following is the message by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the 13th anniversary of the Rwanda genocide, 9 April:

Last year, before being appointed Secretary-General, I visited Rwanda to pay my respects to victims and survivors of the genocide there. I had an opportunity to sit down and talk with those who had endured one of humankind's darkest chapters. The experience had a profound and personal impact on me. I carry it with me every day I serve as the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

On this 13th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, two messages should be paramount.

First, never forget.

Second, never stop working to prevent another genocide.

Today, our thoughts go to the victims -- the more than 800,000 innocent people who lost their lives, with terrifying speed. May they continue to rest in peace.

Our thoughts go to the survivors. Their resilience continues to inspire us.

And our thoughts also go to fallen colleagues of the United Nations family: peacekeepers and civilians who lost their lives in the line of duty as the genocide unfolded. They saved as many lives as they could, and should be remembered for their courage and commitment.

Since those horrendous weeks 13 years ago, the United Nations has learnt profound lessons. We have appointed a Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide. We have established an Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention, which has submitted an ambitious and important report. But we must do more -- much more. In the coming weeks, I intend to strengthen both these mechanisms, including by upgrading the post of Special Adviser to a full-time position.

Africa, too, has taken action. The historic Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region contains a protocol on prevention and punishment of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is encouraging that the countries of the Great Lakes have come together to reflect on the terrible conflicts that have afflicted the region, and are striving to ensure that future generations can live together not only within their own countries, but also with their neighbours. I profoundly hope the protocol will be ratified soon.

All the worlds Governments have agreed in principle to the [responsibility to protect](#) . Our challenge now is to give real meaning to the concept, by taking steps to make it operational. Only then will it truly give hope to those facing genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Preventing genocide is a collective and individual responsibility. Everyone has a role to play: Governments, the media, civil society organizations, religious groups, and each and every one of us. Let us build a global partnership against genocide. Let us protect populations from genocide when their own Government cannot or will not.

Full text available at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sgsm10934.doc.htm>

II. Worldpublicopinion.org Poll on R2P

1. PUBLICS AROUND THE WORLD SAY UN HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT AGAINST GENOCIDE

5 April 2007

Publics around the world say the United Nations has the **responsibility to protect** people from genocide and other severe human rights abuses even if this means acting against the will of their own government, according to a multinational study.

()Support for action to halt genocide is consistent with the final document endorsed by the 2005 United Nations World Summit, which recognized that the world body has a **responsibility to protect** vulnerable populations from enocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity should national authorities fail to do so.

() The study includes 18 countries: China, India, the United States, Indonesia, Russia, France, Thailand, Ukraine, Poland, Iran, Mexico, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Argentina, Peru, Israel and Armenia plus the Palestinian territories. Not all questions were asked in all countries.

()The Chinese public shows the highest level of support for the idea that the United Nations has a responsibility to intervene (76%), followed by Americans (74%), Palestinians (69%) and Israelis (64%). The lowest levels of support are among Ukrainians (40%), Thais (44%), Russians (48%), and Argentines (48%). But the proportions in these four countries that say the UN Security Council does not have such a responsibility ranged between only 16 to 31 percent.

There is an even stronger consensus that the UN Security Council should have the right to authorize the use of military force in such cases. Among the 12 countries asked this question, large majorities say the Security Council should have such a right.

The highest percentages holding this view are in France (85%), Israel (83%), the United States (83%), the Palestinian territories (78%), and South Korea (74%). The lowest levels of support in India (63%), Thailand (62%), and Russia (64%) are still quite high. Support is also strong in China (72%). Those who disagree range between 11 percent and 28 percent.

Thus, in all 15 countries asked one or both of these questions, the most common view is that the UN Security Council has the right and/or the responsibility to authorize military action to stop severe violations of human rights. ()

To view the full report, including specific figures on the situation in Darfur and results by country, please see: http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/home_page/340.php?nid=&id=&pid=340&lb=hmpg1

2. A RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT: THE WORLD'S VIEW

Andrew Stroehlein
Gareth Evans

OpenDemocracy.net

5 April 2007

Trying to draw sustained international media attention to violent conflicts and mass atrocities around the world is a depressing business. The subject-matter is deeply disturbing, attention-spans are limited, and it is often hard to tell if publics are taking any notice in a way that is likely, in turn, to make their governments more responsive.

()But new evidence suggests the message is getting across, at least on one level. A major new twelve-country opinion poll released on 5 April 2007 by WorldPublicOpinion.org and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs reveals some encouraging results regarding attitudes toward mass atrocities in general, and the Darfur tragedy in particular.

On the broader question of whether the United Nations Security Council has the "responsibility to authorise the use of military force to prevent severe human rights violations such as genocide, even against the will of their own government", strong majorities in many countries replied favourably. 74% of Americans agreed, along with 69% of Palestinians, 66% of Armenians, 64% of Israelis, 54% of French and Poles and 51% of Indians. And all populations polled were more in favour than opposed.

Perhaps the most surprising result emerged from China. Though its government has long been considered a staunch defender of state sovereignty under just about all circumstances, a full 76% of Chinese citizens agreed the Security Council had a responsibility to intervene when such mass crimes were taking place.

This is a heartening result. People around the world do feel a fundamental obligation to halt mass atrocities wherever they occur, by whatever means necessary. In short, the "responsibility to protect" doctrine (or "R2P" as it is coming to be abbreviated), has gained real street-credibility, notwithstanding the rearguard action being mounted against it by a number of states who hate the idea of any constraints on their sovereign power. ()

What can be done?

The application of the R2P principle to particular cases like Darfur requires balanced judgment as to what measures will be effective, and what may be counterproductive. The international poll results suggest that when people are reasonably well informed about specific situations they show intuitively sensible practical judgment. Quite a few respondents (especially in countries like Thailand, Ukraine and Armenia) had no opinion on Darfur, perhaps the result of

low attention to it by their national media. But those who did have an opinion got it, in our view, just about right.

In all countries there were strong majorities favouring the Security Council's "right" to authorise military intervention in Darfur, but fewer believed that it had a "responsibility" to so act here and now. When the issue was further narrowed and respondents were asked whether their own country should send troops as part of an international peacekeeping force "to stop the killing in Darfur", support dropped, with only France and the United States tallying more voices for than against.

Most analysts currently believe that, despite the obvious appeal of a full-scale non-consensual ground invasion of Sudan aimed at protecting the people of Darfur once and for all, this would very likely do more harm than good. It would probably make it impossible to maintain existing humanitarian lifelines to millions of people dependent on aid, and throw into disarray the very fragile Sudanese north-south peace now only just holding together. The current focus is on tough economic sanctions, specifically targeted where they would hurt the Khartoum regime's interests most and thus pressure it into doing two things: accepting an effective international civilian protection force and making serious efforts to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable peace settlement with the rebels.

It is intriguing that, on the evidence of this poll, the many people around the world who feel well enough informed about Darfur to have an opinion, do seem to understand that there are many less extreme measures that have not yet been applied but now certainly should be. By and large, people are troubled by major human-rights violations, know what is going on, accept the R2P principle, and - while cautious about applying military force - want appropriate action. It's about time their governments delivered it.

Full text available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-institutions_government/protect_people_4505.jsp#

III. R2P in the News

1. A LIFELINE FOR THE BURMESE

Morton Abramowitz and Jonathan Kolieb

Washington Post
3 April 2007

International policies aimed at opening up Burma's military regime are failing even as they overlook a continuing major tragedy. In January the situation in Burma could not even win serious attention in the U.N. Security Council. The world needs an approach that focuses not on fostering democratic governance but on the critical health and education needs of Burma's long-suffering people.

Western economic sanctions, international diplomatic pressure and "engagement" with the ruling junta by its Asian neighbors have produced scant progress. Given the military's deep stake in the economy, it is unlikely to relinquish power. Rebellion is improbable, and regime change by outside forces is not an option. As long as India and China maintain strong trade, development assistance and military ties with the regime, and Burma produces more natural gas, efforts to end or reduce five decades of military control will be ineffective.

()The military leadership bears responsibility for the degradation of the people. Beyond negligence, the junta increases the people's suffering through mismanagement of the economy, vast underfunding of key social services (despite rising oil and gas revenue), and restriction of personal freedoms and political development. The internationally accepted principle of the "**responsibility to protect**" apparently does not apply for Burma's people. Moral indignation is the practical extent of Western responses to these atrocities.

()Concerned countries will continue their efforts to free Aung San Suu Kyi, the democratically elected Burmese leader who remains under house arrest, and to get the military to embrace meaningful political change. These efforts, however important, are an insufficient response to Burma's worsening situation. The focus must shift from Burma's generals to its people. Imagining that a massive and sustained increase in humanitarian aid can produce political change in Burma over the long term may be a triumph of hope over reality. A program cannot be justified on that score. But if we can improve the lives of millions and avert further human disaster, it is incumbent upon us to try.

Morton Abramowitz is a senior fellow at the Century Foundation and a former U.S. ambassador to Thailand. Jonathan Kolieb is a research associate at the Century Foundation.

Full text available at:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/02/AR2007040201263.html>

2. Fleeing the Janjaweed: a people brutalised and betrayed

Jody Williams

The Independent

24 March 2007

Flying over the vast expanse of Chadian desert to get to the refugee camps housing tens of thousands of refugees from Darfur, you get a very clear picture of what normal villages look like on both sides of the border. Small clusters of perhaps 10 to 20 thatched huts are ringed by fences made out of branches of the thorn tree. Sometimes a few kilometres away there will be another cluster of huts, but sometimes a village is isolated.

I had no trouble imaging an attack by Sudanese forces and their Janjaweed militias. This was my second trip to the camps and the day before, a group of despairing women I met with in the Gaga Camp - the only one of twelve camps in Chad that is still accepting refugees from Darfur - had talked about the attacks they had lived through. They all described the chaos and terror in their villages as men attacked on camel and horseback, accompanied by Sudanese government troops in vehicles, in the early hours of the morning, while most were still sleeping.

()And these are only a handful of the stories I heard this February as I headed a six-member "High Level Mission" for the UN's Human Rights Council. We were to make an assessment of the situation in Darfur and what was needed to deal with the acute crisis there, and report back to the 47-member Council in March. Despite the complete lack of cooperation by the government in Khartoum, we were able to complete our work and I presented our report to the council on 15 March.

Khartoum made every attempt to derail our Mission. Even though Sudan's President Bashir had personally assured the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, that we would be given full cooperation and assistance, predictably Bashir's words were hollow. From the moment our mission came together on 5 February, Khartoum began manoeuvres to block our entry into Darfur. We tried a dozen times over 20 days to get visas to go to Sudan, but they were never issued.

Sudan tried every trick to try to stop us from leaving Geneva, but we left as scheduled for

meetings with the African Union - which has a protection force in Darfur - in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where we still hoped Sudan would relent and give us visas. The visas never came, and we went on to Chad, where we heard the horrific stories of some of the 230,000 refugees from Darfur.

()As I kept hearing that over and over, I kept thinking about the lofty principle of "the responsibility to protect". If the people of Darfur need protection, whose responsibility is it to provide it? Who is failing in that responsibility?

At the UN World Summit in September 2005, the 191 states in the UN formally adopted the principle of the responsibility to protect. That UN resolution stated that every government has the responsibility to protect its people from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. It also said that when a government is unable or unwilling to protect its own people, it becomes the responsibility of the international community. There is no question that the government of the Sudan has completely failed to protect the people of Darfur. Obviously, in fact, it has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in its counter-insurgency war there; and the situation is worse, not better, since the signing of the "Darfur peace agreement".

But, the international community has not done much better. It has let Khartoum obstruct efforts to stop the slaughter in Darfur. Attempts to respond to the crisis with humanitarian, human rights and development assistance through the African Union and the UN have fallen far short of the protection Darfurians continue to cry out for.

Part of the problem is the fact that, internationally, governments are not united about how to deal with Khartoum - and some think that there should be no "interference" in the affairs of a "sovereign state" anyway.

With no consistent international pressure on Khartoum to stop the killing and finally negotiate a meaningful peace for the region - a peace that includes power and resource-sharing as well as compensation for the victims of the war, especially for the women who have suffered rape as a weapon of war - the war rages on. As long as Khartoum knows that the threats of the international community are hollow, it can continue to respond with equally hollow promises to deal with the situation.

It does not take a lot of analysis to recognise the needs for Darfur. Unfortunately, unless consistent pressure is put upon Khartoum, it is likely that little will come from renewed efforts by the UN and AU envoys working to re-open Darfur peace negotiations, despite their commitment and best efforts to help the people of Darfur. And if the actions of the UN's Human Rights Council during our mission and before we presented our report are any measure, it is quite clear that many in the "international community" feel that their responsibility is to protect the small group of men clinging to power in Khartoum, rather than the people of Darfur from the abuses of that power.

The hardest part of our work on Darfur was not the briefings, the travel, the difficult stories we had to bear witness to or the report that we wrote. It was dealing with the political infighting in Geneva and particularly within the Human Rights Council. It was witnessing governments accepting the lies and distortions of Khartoum about their crimes in Darfur, and about our mission as well. It was witnessing the manoeuvring among the states on the Council to completely block presentation of our report and put it on a shelf somewhere to gather dust. And since we did manage to present it on 16 March, it has been watching the infighting continue as the council tries to find a way to "respond" to the report without really doing anything to protect the people of Darfur.

The UN's Human Rights Council cannot be blamed in isolation; it is a window into the world of the "international community" that seems to see "**responsibility to protect**" meaning protecting the sovereign state and not the people that state is supposed to serve. And while they play politics in Geneva, it is the people of Darfur who continue to suffer and to die.

The **responsibility to protect** came about in part as a response to the genocide in Rwanda. The world hung its head in shame and said, "Never again". We all should be hanging our heads in shame now.

Full text available at: <http://news.independent.co.uk/world/africa/article2387810.ece>

3. THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

Cathy Cockrell

UC Berkeley News

21 March 2007

Romo Dallaire, a witness to genocide in Rwanda, argues for a new international principle known as R2P

A newly emerging international tool for stopping mass atrocities was at the heart of a two-day human rights conference last week on the Berkeley campus. So it was ironic, and yet consummately appropriate, that it opened with an address from Romo Dallaire, the Canadian lieutenant general who, by his own accounting, tried and failed to stop the mass atrocities of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Humanity is now in an era "where classic war doesn't work and classic peacekeeping doesn't work," the former head of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Rwanda told a packed audience at the International House Chevron Auditorium the evening of March 13. The first Gulf war was among the last old-school conflicts that conservative generals dream of, he contended. One morning in 1991, riffed Dallaire, a "big, burly American general," Norman Schwarzkopf, "opened the flap of his tent, looked outside, saw the sun, studied the entrails of a pigeon, and said 'Go!' And when he did that, 600,000 men and women in uniform," equipped with the latest weapons systems, moved into action against "another massive force with its tanks, trenches, barbed wire, mines, and its people in uniform, around 400,000."

But Gulf war I, and even the opening act of the Iraq war, were post-Cold War anomalies, Dallaire believes. Today, global conflict increasingly takes the form of terrorism against civilian populations. In Iraq, for example, after Saddam Hussein was toppled, "the situation changed. The killing didn't stop, the troops were still fighting," he noted. "But there was no more [opposing] army; they were in civilian dress; they were incorporated into the society." ()

Safeguarding vulnerable populations

In an "era of imploding nations [that] is not going away," said Dallaire, the international community needs "a whole new set of tools, a new conceptual base to conflict resolution." To that end, he endorsed the burgeoning international effort to refine, win international support for, and "operationalize" the "**responsibility to protect**" (R2P). This new international-security and human-rights doctrine holds that the world community has a "responsibility to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity" including by taking timely and decisive military action, as a last resort, when nation states will not or cannot protect their own populations from such threats. Adopted by all 192 nations at the U.N. World Summit in late 2005, **R2P** clearly brands military intervention as an option of last resort, and lays out the specific circumstances in which this radical step would be deemed necessary. (The U.S.-led intervention in Iraq would not

have met the criteria.) To implement

R2P

fully, proponents need to build political will in each country and reform processes at the U.N. so that action could be taken in a timely manner.

The new doctrine, says HRC Executive Director Camille Crittenden, was developed in large part in response to the tragic failures of Rwanda. One of its original authors and the conference keynote speaker was the former Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans, who has said of the current moment: "Now, for all that we repeatedly chant the post-Holocaust, post-Cambodia, post-Rwanda mantra of 'never again,' we are asking ourselves yet again, in the face of more mass killing and dying in Darfur, whether we really are capable of stopping nation-states murdering or killing by neglect their own people."

The "Stopping Mass Atrocities" conference, hosted by HRC, was only the second devoted to the **responsibility to protect**, says Crittenden. "There isn't any sort of **R2P** central headquarters that's coordinating efforts." Consequently, participants plan to draft a summary document and hope to contribute "to creation of a central infrastructure for making

R2P

a reality," she says.

What can individuals do to move the process forward? "Join NGOs; give them your brain power. Get your boots dirty," advised Dallaire. "Go touch, smell, taste the reality" of developing and underdeveloped nations. And then "come back and influence the situation. Move into a sense of responsibility to humanity."

Full text available at: http://www.berkeley.edu/news/berkeleyan/2007/03/21_protect.shtml