

International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect

10 April 2009

www.responsibilitytoprotect.org

Subject: Call for NGOs to Join the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect

Dear colleagues,

We are writing to update you on membership criterion and application process as agreed to by the founding Steering Committee of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect on January 27-28, 2009. Final founding documents of the Coalition were completed a few weeks ago and will be posted soon on our website (www.responsibilitytoprotect.org), currently undergoing a complete redesign.

In order to build a strategic and effective Coalition, the first groups we wanted to reach out to for Membership are groups that the R2PCS project has been working with over the past 6 years. For this reason, we are sending this email out to those NGOs who have expressed interested in following RtoP through our listserv and have attended our consultative roundtables and other events.

As previously mentioned, the General Assembly is expected to hold a debate on the Responsibility to Protect, following the Secretary Generals 12 January 2009 report implementing the Responsibility to Protect. As we move toward this debate, we will need your help. Non-governmental organizations have an important role to play in capitals to ensure that governments will be making strong statements of support for the RtoP norm during the debate. We will also need to build strategic partnerships between NGOs in the coming months, as regional organizations and sub-regional organizations take further steps to endorse the norm, as conflicts and crises will require NGOs to push for action, and as governments make commitments to increase their capacity to prevent and halt genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

We strongly encourage you to **read the Membership information below and to consider joining the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect.**

Sincerely,

Bill, Sapna, Marion and Voke

The Secretariat of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect

**We are conscious that there are government representatives, media, academia and other individuals subscribed to this listserv, however as indicated above, Coalition membership is limited to NGOs. We invite you to stay informed about RtoP developments through this listserv as we will continue to offer the news, analysis, events, and reports on RtoP.

The Coalitions Common Understanding of RtoP

Founding Purposes of the Coalition
Coalition Membership Criterion
Membership Application

1. THE COALITIONS COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF RtoP

As non-governmental organizations, we endorse the Responsibility to Protect as a new international security and human rights doctrine to address the international community's failure to prevent and stop genocides, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We agree to support and uphold these RtoP principles:

The Responsibility to Protect expresses the world's responsibility to protect populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Coalition commits to support the essential elements of the Responsibility to Protect norm agreed to in Paragraphs 138-139 at the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome Document.

States have the primary obligation to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. This responsibility also includes prevention of these crimes, including incitement.

The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility.

The international community should support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.

4. The international community also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means under Chapter VI and VIII of the UN Charter to help protect populations threatened by these crimes.

5. When a state manifestly fails in its protection responsibilities, and peaceful means are inadequate, the international community must take stronger measures including Chapter VII measures of the UN Charter, including but not limited to the collective use of force authorized by the Security Council.

In addition,

The Coalition supports a full spectrum of responsibility: from the responsibility to prevent, to react, and to rebuild.

The Coalition believes the Responsibility to Protect requires the international community to recognize that conflict affects women and men differently. This is an essential first step in developing gendered responses to conflict, empowering women in the prevention and ending of conflicts, and the rebuilding of communities after conflict.

Based on this common understanding of RtoP, Coalition Members agree to:

To promote these RtoP principles among non-governmental organizations, governments, policy-makers and the public.

To ensure that Responsibility to Protect is restricted to genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, as articulated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

To defend against the Responsibility to Protect being interpreted as a new version of military humanitarian intervention.

To guard against the abuse of the norm by governments, regional organizations or international organizations.

2. FOUNDING PURPOSES OF THE COALITION

With the above common understanding of RtoP, the Coalition will pursue the following purposes

To strengthen normative consensus for RtoP at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels

To push for governments, regional and sub-regional organizations and the UN to strengthen capacities to prevent and halt genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes.

To further the understanding of RtoP among governments, non-governmental organizations, and the public.

To help build and fortify a like-minded group of governments in support of RtoP

To mobilize non-governmental organizations to push for action to save lives in RtoP country-specific situations.

3. MEMBERSHIP CRITERION

1. The International Coalition for RtoP is a voluntary coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), consistent with the principles of [UN ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31](#) , from all regions of the world.

2. The Coalition supports NGO members from all sectors and with a diversity of mandates. The Coalition encourages members from all community levels: national, regional and global.

3. Academic institutions and departments are welcome to join the Coalition.

4. Membership is restricted to non-governmental organizations. Government operated and controlled NGOs, or NGOs who do not operate independently, with neutrality, and with impartiality of government influence are not eligible for membership.

5. Individual or private sector supporters are encouraged to support RtoP but only their not-for-profit components are eligible for membership.

6. The Coalition will be open to national and regional RtoP networks. National or regional RtoP networks/coalitions must have prior approval from the Secretariat to be affiliated in name with the International Coalition for RtoP.

7. Members must endorse the common understanding of RtoP principles and the founding purposes of the Coalition. Any advocacy efforts that Members undertake should reflect these principles and purposes.

8. The Coalition Secretariat is responsible for membership decisions. If the Secretariat is unable to determine whether a potential Member is eligible, the Secretariat will seek guidance from the Steering Committee.

4. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Does your organization endorse the common understanding of RtoP principles and the founding purposes of the Coalition?

What are the name, history and mandate of the organization?

What are the sources of funding and the budget available to the organization?

The organization must be legally registered or formally recognized by authorities in the country in which it is located. Please explain the status of your NGO.

Members must have a program (prevention, rebuilding/women, peace & security, human rights, country-specific, etc) specifically related to the principles of the Responsibility to Protect. Describe the RtoP-related activities of your organization in detail.

Does your organization wish to become actively engaged in campaigns to advance R2P or is your organization interested in more passive membership, i.e. accessing information services, forums, documents, and events? Please describe why your organization wants to become a member and the level of commitment your organization is prepared to offer the Coalition.

Please return all applications to
membership@responsibilitytoprotect.org
or to the address below

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