

**From:** Oxfam International, CARE International, International Rescue Committee, Human Rights Watch, International Save the Children Alliance, Refugees International, World Federalist Movement

**To:** Permanent Representatives of the members of the United Nations Security Council

**Re:** **Inclusion of Responsibility to Protect in Security Council Resolution on Protection of Civilians in armed conflict**

Your Excellencies,

We write to express our support of the inclusion of a reference to “responsibility to protect” in the draft resolution currently being negotiated by members of the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. We are gravely concerned that members of the Council and other governments are seeking to revise Operative Paragraph 6 in order to weaken or remove the reference to commitments made at the 2005 World Summit on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

The resolution on the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the Open Debate scheduled for December 9 offer an historic opportunity for the Security Council and other Member States to affirm the commitment made by Heads of State and government in the World Summit Outcome Document.

Provisions of the World Summit Outcome Document on the responsibility to protect recognize that the Security Council has a particular responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. NGOs believe that the commitment in the Outcome Document establishes that the Security Council must take action in circumstances where past indifference or indecision of the international community has resulted in the loss of millions of civilian lives.

The draft resolution on the protection of civilians in armed conflict is an important opportunity for the Security Council to affirm this responsibility and agree to act on it. We support the language contained in the operative paragraph of the 21 November 2005 draft Security Council resolution which recalls the World Summit Outcome Documents and “underlines the importance of its provisions regarding the responsibility to protect...” The undersigned organizations maintain that the language proposed in Operative Paragraph 6 of the draft of 21 November is the *minimum necessary* for the Council to affirm the commitments made at the Summit.

Nevertheless, we believe that the Security Council could use this resolution to demonstrate an even stronger commitment to this agenda. We suggest the following paragraph should be included in the resolution:

***Undertakes to consider, where national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, timely and decisive action to protect those***

**populations, in accordance with Chapters VI, VII and VIII of the Charter as appropriate;**

In conclusion, we urge you to work with fellow Council members to ensure that a clear reference to the World Summit's commitment affirming a collective responsibility to protect populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes remain in the resolution on protection of civilians and that the Council commit to a clear expression of its willingness to act on this responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

**Oxfam International**

**Human Rights Watch**

**World Federalist Movement  
International**

**Refugees International**

**International Rescue Committee**

**International Save the Children  
Alliance**

**CARE**

Cc. H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson, President of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly