Responsibility to Protect ("RtoP" or "R2P")

The responsibility to protect embodies a political commitment to end the worst forms of violence and persecution. It seeks to narrow the gap between Member States’ pre-existing obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law and the reality faced by populations at risk of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.


UN Entities


UN Events

- General Assembly plenary meetings on “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity - Item 134: report of the Secretary-General (A/76/844), 23-24 June 2022

- General Assembly plenary meetings on agenda item 135 “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity (17 and 18 May 2021)
  - A/RES/75/277: The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity: [http://undocs.org/A/RES/75/277](http://undocs.org/A/RES/75/277)
  - Meeting records: [https://undocs.org/A/75/PV.64](https://undocs.org/A/75/PV.64), [https://undocs.org/A/75/PV.65](https://undocs.org/A/75/PV.65), [https://undocs.org/A/75/PV.66](https://undocs.org/A/75/PV.66)

High-level virtual panel discussion “Fifteen years of the responsibility to protect - a collective commitment to humanity”, 7 October 2020:
  - Concept Note: https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/Concept%20note%20-%20R2P@15%20event.pdf
  - Statement by H.E. Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (Delivered by H.E. Ms. Tegan Brink, Chef de Cabinet to the President of the General Assembly), 7 October 2020: https://bit.ly/2GSOwxQ

General Assembly Plenary Meeting on agenda item 168 “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (27-28 June 2019)

Formal Debate of the General Assembly under agenda item “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (25 June 2018)

  - Concept Note: https://bit.ly/2xQtaYV
  - Summary: https://bit.ly/3v0RdRN

High-level event on “Upholding the Responsibility to Protect: The Indispensable Role of Religious Leaders in Preventing Atrocity Crimes” (at the ministerial level) (co-organized by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See, the Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect and the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect) (20 September 2016)
  - Webcast: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1e/k1etb5otrz

  - Concept Note & Programme: https://bit.ly/3fnvXLC

General Assembly High-level Thematic Panel Discussion “From Commitment to Implementation: Ten Years of the Responsibility to Protect” (26 February 2016): http://www.un.org/pga/70/events/r2p/
  - Concept Note: https://bit.ly/3yprdBK
  o Webcasts: [https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1y/k1yyw28mkr](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1y/k1yyw28mkr), [https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1i/k1i58ie8s9](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1i/k1i58ie8s9)
  o Press Conference with Mr. Adama Dieng, Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Ms. Jennifer Welsh, Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect: [http://media.un.org/en/asset/k1n/k1nhyl8hhl](http://media.un.org/en/asset/k1n/k1nhyl8hhl)

  o Webcasts: [https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1l/k1l58le8s9](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1l/k1l58le8s9), [https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1e/k1e0b9e4az](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1e/k1e0b9e4az)


  o Webcasts: [https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1q1udg824](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1q1udg824)

### Selected UN Documents

- **A/76/844-S/2022/428** (26 May 2022): Responsibility to protect: prioritizing children and young people: Report of the Secretary-General: [https://undocs.org/A/76/844](https://undocs.org/A/76/844)


- **A/74/964-S/2020/501** (23 July 2020): Prioritizing prevention and strengthening response: women and the responsibility to protect: report of the Secretary-General: [http://undocs.org/A/74/964](http://undocs.org/A/74/964)

- **A/HRC/RES/44/14**: Fifteenth anniversary of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as enshrined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome: resolution / adopted by the Human Rights Council on 17 July 2020: [http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/44/14](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/44/14)


- **A/70/999-S/2016/620** (22 July 2016): Mobilizing collective action: the next decade of the responsibility to protect; Report of the Secretary-General: [http://undocs.org/A/70/999](http://undocs.org/A/70/999)


  Transmits summary and conclusions of the 5th meeting of the Global Network of Responsibility to Protect Focal Points, held in Madrid, 23-24 June 2015.

• A/65/877-S/2011/393 (28 June 2011): The role of regional and subregional arrangements in implementing the responsibility to protect: report of the Secretary-General: http://undocs.org/A/65/877
• A/64/864 (14 July 2010): Early warning, assessment and the responsibility to protect: Report of the Secretary-General: http://undocs.org/A/64/864
• A/RES/63/308 (adopted 14 September 2009): The responsibility to protect; http://undocs.org/A/RES/63/308
• A/63/958 (9 September 2009): Concept note on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity: note / by the President of the General Assembly: http://undocs.org/A/63/958
In the second preambular paragraph of this resolution, the Security Council recalled its earlier reaffirmation of the provisions regarding the provisions of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document.
In paragraph 4 of this resolution, the Security Council reaffirmed the provisions of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome regarding the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
• A/RES/60/1 (adopted 16 September 2005): 2005 World Summit Outcome: resolution http://undocs.org/A/RES/60/1
Paragraphs 138 and 139 of this document: “Responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity”
Transmits report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty entitled “The Responsibility to Protect”

Selected Statements and Speeches by UN Officials

- Statements by the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on the Responsibility to Protect: https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/public-statements.shtml


• Deputy-Secretary-General says ‘responsibility to protect’ must be translated into more systematic implementation at early warnings of atrocity crimes (DSG/SM/793-GA/11539, 8 September 2014): [http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/dsgsm793.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/dsgsm793.doc.htm)


• Secretary-General, in Message on Responsibility to Protect, says prevention must start at home, with ‘honest assessment of both risk and resilience’ (SG/SM/15351, 27 September 2013): [http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/smsg15351.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/smsg15351.doc.htm)


History of atrocity crimes is not one of acting too boldly, but of doing too little, too late, Secretary-General tells General Assembly (SG/SM/13700-GA/11113, 12 July 2011): http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sgsm13700.doc.htm


Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon tells Center for Strategic and International Studies he has 'hit the ground running', as year ahead will be 'deeply taxing'; priorities include responsibility to protect, Middle East, Darfur, Kosovo, non-proliferation, development goals, HIV/Aids, climate change, human rights (SG/SM/10842, 17 January 2007): http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sgsm10842.doc.htm


Selected UN Publications & Articles available online


The European Union’s Role in Promoting and Implementing the Responsibility to Protect in Africa: Turning Political Commitments into Effective Action / by Andrej Kirin (United Nations University, Comparative Regional Integration Studies, Bruges Regional Integration & Global Governance Papers 2011/1): http://cris.unu.edu/sites/cris.unu.edu/files/BRIGG_2011-1_0.pdf

Refugees, internally displaced persons and the 'responsibility to protect' / Susan Harris Rimmer (UNHCR, March 2010): http://www.unhcr.org/4b97b0909.html

Embracing the "responsibility to protect": a repertoire of measures including asylum for potential victims / by Brian Barbour (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR, Policy Development and Evaluation Service, July 2008): http://www.unhcr.org/research/RESEARCH/487b619b0.pdf

Further Information

- International Criminal Court (ICC): http://www.icc-cpi.int/
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict: http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/
- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Thematic Areas: Protection: https://www.unocha.org/themes/protection
- UNRIC Library Backgrounders

Non-UN Sources

- International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP): https://www.globalr2p.org/international-coalition-for-the-responsibility-to-protect/
- Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect: http://www.globalr2p.org/