

# The Responsibility to Protect: Creating and Implementing a New International Norm, Gareth Evans

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It has taken the world an insanely long time, centuries in fact, to come to terms conceptually with the idea that state sovereignty is not a license to kill — that there is something fundamentally and intolerably wrong about states murdering or forcibly displacing large numbers of their own citizens, or standing by when others do so, and that it is unacceptable for the rest of the world to allow that to happen. With the emergence of the responsibility to protect concept — or 'R2P' as we are now all calling it in this age of acronymphomania — and in particular with its endorsement by the World Summit of 2005, and subsequently by the Security Council, we seem to have at last passed that milestone.

But there is still a big distance to go before we can be comfortable that emerging R2P situations will be understood as such; that there will be a reflex international response — both among governments and publics — supportive of the need to respond appropriately, both preventively before the event and reactively after it, even when no national interests can be directly called in aid; and that the necessary policy tools and mechanisms will be in place, able and ready to be quickly mobilised. Anyone who thinks we no longer have to fear another Holocaust, Rwanda, Srebrenica or Kosovo just hasn't been concentrating.

## **The Problem from Hell**

To begin at the beginning. The view has prevailed for centuries — all the way back to the emergence of the modern system of sovereign states in the 1600s — that what happens within state borders, however grotesque and morally indefensible, is basically nobody else's business.

Even after World War II, and Hitler's Holocaust, the overwhelming preoccupation of those who founded the UN was the problem of states waging aggressive war against each other. Some progress was certainly made, with individual and group human rights recognized in the UN Charter and, more grandly and explicitly, in the Universal Declaration. And with the drafting of the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal in 1945 came the recognition in international law of the concept of 'crimes against humanity',

which could be committed by a government against its own people, and not necessarily just during wartime. But what captured the mood of the time more than any of these provisions was Article 2(7) of the UN Charter: "Nothing should authorise intervention in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State".

Not even the signing of the Genocide Convention of 1948 made much difference, despite its apparently explicit override of the non-intervention principle for the most extreme of all crimes against humanity. The state of mind that even massive atrocity crimes like those of the Cambodian killing fields were not the rest of the world's business prevailed throughout the UN's first half-century of existence: Vietnam's invasion, which stopped the Khmer Rouge in its tracks, was universally attacked, not applauded.

With the arrival of the 1990s, and the end of the Cold War, the prevailing complacent assumptions about non-intervention did at last come under challenge, as never before. *The* quintessential peace and security problem became not interstate war, but civil war and internal violence perpetrated on a massive scale. With the break-up of various Cold War state structures, most obviously in Yugoslavia, and the removal of some superpower constraints, conscience-shocking situations repeatedly arose. But old habits of non-intervention died very hard. Even when situations cried out for some kind of response, and the international community did react through the UN, it was too often erratically, incompletely or counter-productively, as in the debacle of Somalia in 1993, the catastrophe of Rwandan genocide in 1994, and the almost unbelievable default in Srebrenica just a year later, in 1995.

Then the killing and ethnic cleansing started all over again in Kosovo in 1999, with it becoming rapidly apparent that external military intervention was the only way to stop it. But again the Security Council failed to act in the face of a threatened veto by Russia. The action that needed to be taken was eventually taken, by a coalition of the willing, but in a way that raised anxious questions about the integrity of the whole international security system.

Now again, since 2003, we have been confronted with the alarming situation in Darfur, dragging on and on with still only the beginnings of an end in sight, with more than 200,000 dead and two and a half million displaced. This is not a simple situation to characterize — with neither 'Arab v. African' or 'genocide' labels easy to apply, and the government able to point to the role of the rebel groups both in initiating and certainly now continuing the conflict — but it is one that has unquestionably involved a grotesque over-reaction by the Bashir regime, large scale killing, village burning, rape, immense continuing suffering for millions of people, with both the African Union and the wider international community failing to stop it.

All that said, Darfur is not necessarily the worst man-made catastrophe with which we are currently dealing. That dubious honour probably already belongs to Iraq, where more than 3 million people have been displaced so far and around a thousand people are dying violently every month — in a situation which is unquestionably capable of deteriorating further into full-blooded ethnic cleansing and genocide on a scale greater than we

witnessed even in the Balkans. But the only debate we are witnessing in the West is how fast the Coalition forces can be pulled out while still allowing the Al Qaeda dimension of the conflict to be contained, protecting the institutions of government such as they are, and somehow stopping the wider region imploding. Understandable as this focus may be given the whole history of this conflict, and the catastrophic mismanagement of the occupation, I find it disconcerting how few people of good will — including, it seems, every Democrat candidate for the US presidency — are prepared to look at the current situation from the perspective of those millions of ordinary citizens who are already in daily fear of their lives, and know that the situation could get very much worse, just as did the catastrophes of the 90s in respect to which we now lament the total inadequacy of the global response.

What has been going on here? Why have we said 'Never Again' so many times, only to have to say it again, and again, each time wondering, with varying degrees of degrees of incomprehension, horror, anger and shame, how we could have let it all happen again? There are no easy answers to this, but at least five factors seem to be relevant:

- The tenacity of the core idea, going all the way back to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, that sovereignty means, above all else, control of a state's territory, unfettered by external constraints
- The prevalence and reinforcement of that 'unfettered control' mindset among the large number of new states which emerged during the decolonisation era to numerically dominate the UN chamber: all newly proud of their identity, conscious in many cases of their fragility, and generally seeing the non-intervention norm as one of their few defences against threats and pressures from more powerful international actors seeking to promote their own economic and political interests.
- The profound suspicion on the part of many countries in the global South — much reinforced now, of course, by the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 — that for all their high-minded talk of human rights and civilian protection, the big players in the global North will always be only too keen to ride roughshod over the weaker ones in pursuit of their own national interests, and should not be given any kind of excuse to do so.
- The inability, at least until very recently, to conceptualise the issue of internal civilian protection against genocide and other crimes against humanity in other than *military* terms: the notion of 'humanitarian intervention', which dominated debate during the 1990s and continues to confuse it today, was conceived entirely in terms of non-consensual military force, and not as a graduated series of lesser measures with military action only as an absolute last resort.
- Something more profound, and in many ways more troubling: the emerging evidence, in experiments documented in the *New Scientist* earlier this year, that Stalin was not far off the mark when he reputedly said 'One man's death is a tragedy; a million is a statistic.' The capacity to experience 'affect' — the emotional rather than rational component of decision-making, that which enables us to *feel* an issue and want to do something about it — is dulled rather than

enhanced by large numbers. One recent U.S. study went so far as to demonstrate that donations to aid a particular starving 7 year-old girl in Africa actually declined sharply when her image was accompanied by a statistical summary of millions like her elsewhere on the continent. If we are looking for spontaneous compassion to light the policymakers flame when it comes to mass atrocities, this may not be as easy as we sometimes assume.

It seemed by the end of the 1990s that the 'never again' problem was going to be with us forever — the 'problem from hell' as Samantha Power described it in her brilliant book on the inability, or unwillingness, of the U.S. to respond effectively to genocide and mass atrocity.

Neither of the big efforts that had been made during that decade to set international thinking on a new path succeeded in generating any kind of consensus. The concept that dominated discourse most of that period was that coined by the founder of *Medicines Sans Frontier*, and now French Foreign Minister, Bernard Kouchner: '*droit d'ingérence*' — the 'right to intervene', or, more fully, the 'right of humanitarian intervention'. But the trouble with this language is that, while it was from many perspectives a noble and effective rallying cry, around the world it enraged as many as it inspired.

And then, towards the end of the decade, there was the attempt made by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to resolve the conceptual impasse at the heart of this debate by arguing that national sovereignty had to be weighed and balanced in these cases against *individual* sovereignty, as recognised in the international human rights instruments. But this fell on deaf ears, being seen not so much as resolving the dilemma of intervention but restating it.

## **The Birth of a Solution**

But out of all this despondency it does seem that a way forward has emerged, with the emergence and embrace, at least formally — and in a remarkably short time when measured against the decades or more it usually takes for new ideas to catch hold — of the concept of 'the responsibility to protect'.

The breakthrough came with the publication of the report of that name by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), sponsored with great commitment and foresight by the Canadian Government, which I had the privilege of co-chairing along with the distinguished Algerian diplomat and veteran UN Africa adviser Mohamed Sahnoun. We made, I think it is fair to say, four main contributions to the international policy debate which seem to have been resonating ever since.

The first, and perhaps ultimately the politically most useful, was to invent a new way of talking about 'humanitarian intervention'. We sought to turn the whole weary debate

about the 'right to intervene' on its head, and to recharacterise it not as an argument about the 'right' of states to anything, but rather about their 'responsibility' — one to protect people at grave risk: the relevant perspective, we argued, was not that of prospective interveners but those needing support. The searchlight was swung back where it should always be: on the need to protect communities from mass killing and ethnic cleansing, women from systematic rape and children from starvation.

The Commission's hope was — and so far, broadly, our experience has been — that using 'responsibility to protect' rather than 'right to intervene' language would enable entrenched opponents to find new ground on which to more constructively engage. We very much had in mind the power of new ideas, or old ideas newly expressed, to actually change the behaviour of key policy actors. And a model we very much had in mind in this respect was the Brundtland Commission, which a few years earlier had introduced the concept of 'sustainable development' to bridge the huge gap which then existed between developers and environmentalists. With a new script, the actors have to change their lines, and think afresh about what the real issues in the play actually are.

The second contribution of the Commission, linked with the first and again conceptually significant, was to insist upon a new way of talking about sovereignty: we argued, building on an earlier formulation by Francis Deng (the Sudanese scholar and diplomat recently appointed by Ban Ki Moon as Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities), that its essence should now be seen not as 'control', as in the centuries old Westphalian tradition, but, again, as 'responsibility'. The starting point is that any state has the primary responsibility to protect the individuals within it. But that is not the finishing point: where the state fails in that responsibility, through either incapacity or ill-will, a secondary responsibility to protect falls on the wider international community. That, in a nutshell, is the core of the responsibility to protect idea, or 'R2P' as we are all now calling it for short.

The third contribution of the Commission was to make it clear that the 'responsibility to protect' was about much more than intervention, and in particular military intervention. It extends to a whole continuum of obligations: the responsibility to *prevent* these situations arising; the responsibility to *react* to them when they did, with a whole graduated menu of responses, from the persuasive to the coercive; and the responsibility to *rebuild* after any intrusive intervention.

The remaining contribution of the Commission was to come up with guidelines for when the most extreme form of coercive reaction, military action, would be appropriate. The first criterion was obviously *legality*, and here we saw our task as not to try and find alternatives to the clear legal authority of the Security Council, but rather to make it work better, so there was less chance of it being bypassed. That was followed by five criteria of *legitimacy*, designed as a set of benchmarks which, while they might not guarantee consensus in any particular case, would hopefully make its achievement much more likely.

It is one thing to develop a concept like the responsibility to protect, but quite another to get any policy maker to take any notice of it. The most interesting thing about the *Responsibility to Protect* report is the way its central theme has continued to gain traction internationally, even though it was almost suffocated at birth by being published in December 2001, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, and by the massive international preoccupation with terrorism, rather than internal human rights catastrophes, which then began.

The concept was first seriously embraced in the doctrine of the newly emerging African Union, created in 2002, which unlike its predecessor organization, the OAU, placed the emphasis, when it came to catastrophic internal human rights violations not on 'non-interference' but on 'non-indifference'. Over the next two to three years it also won quite a constituency among academic commentators and international lawyers (a not unimportant constituency, given that international law is the rather odd beast that it is — capable of evolving through practice and commentary as well as through formal treaty instruments).

But the really big step forward in terms of formal acceptance of R2P came with the UN 60th Anniversary World Summit in September 2005. This followed a major preparatory effort involving the report of the 2004 High Level Panel on new security threats (of which I was, rather conveniently, a member) which fed in turn into a major report by the Secretary-General himself. Both these reports emphatically embraced the responsibility to protect concept, and the Summit Outcome Document, unanimously agreed by the more than 150 heads of state and government present and meeting as the UN General Assembly, unambiguously picked up their core recommendations. Its language, though a little wordier and woollier than it needed to be, was quite clear-cut in picking up the core theme of the Commission report. The key words were these:

- *Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity... We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it...*
- *The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to help to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII..., should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.*

That this endorsement happened was anything but inevitable. Not much else of any significance was agreed by the Summit, despite all the preparatory build-up and high expectations. A fierce rearguard action was fought almost to the last by a small group of developing countries, joined by Russia, who basically refused to concede any kind of limitation on the full and untrammelled exercise of state sovereignty, however irresponsible that exercise might be.

What carried the day in the end was not so much consistent support from the EU and U.S. — support which after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was not particularly helpful, it has to be acknowledged, when it came to meeting these familiar sovereignty concerns. Much more important was persistent advocacy by sub-Saharan African countries, led by South Africa, supplemented by a clear — and historically quite significant — embrace of limited-sovereignty principles by the key Latin American countries. There was also some very effective last minute personal diplomacy directed to leaders of major wavering countries, including in Asia, by the Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin, demonstrating the importance of seriously committed follow through, which doesn't always happen, by countries commissioning reports of this kind.

Australia's position throughout the UN debate, it should be acknowledged, was always one of strong support for the concept, and our Permanent Representative John Dauth was personally as active and effective as any Western diplomat could have been. But, as on many other multilateral issues over the last decade, we were not particularly engaged at the political level, were hampered on this particular issue by our frontline participation in the Iraq invasion, and certainly were nothing like as effective as Canada, a country with whom we normally like to compare ourselves.

A further important conceptual development has occurred since the September 2005 Summit: the adoption by the Security Council in April last year of a thematic resolution on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict which contains, in an operative paragraph, an express reaffirmation of the World Summit conclusions relating to the responsibility to protect. And we have now begun to see that resolution in turn now being invoked in subsequent specific situations, as with Resolution 1706 of 31 August 2006 on Darfur. A General Assembly resolution may be helpful, as the World Summit's unquestionably was, in identifying relevant principles, but the Security Council is the institution that matters when it comes to executive action. And at least a toehold there has now been carved.

What is just as intriguing, and heartening, as these formal developments is the evidence that is now emerging that people around the world seem to think that we have it right in formulating the principle that there are limits to state sovereignty when it comes to the protection of people from genocide and similarly severe human rights violations. A major new opinion poll was released in April this year by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and WorldPublicOpinion.org which found that, in each of the eleven countries surveyed, many more people favoured than were opposed to the proposition that 'the UN Security Council has the responsibility to authorise the use of military force to protect people from severe human rights violations such as genocide, even against the will of their own government'. An extraordinary 76 per cent of Chinese approved, as did 74 per cent of Americans, and for example 69 per cent of Palestinians, 64 per cent of Israelis, 54 per cent of French and Poles, and 51 per cent of Indians.

So when it comes to ensuring that never again do we have another Rwanda, I think the reality is clear that we are not going to any better, for the indefinitely foreseeable future,

than the R2P principle. It touches the right bases, and the right chords, and has shown that it is capable of winning very broad international acceptance indeed. In just over five years R2P has evolved from a gleam in a rather obscure international commission's eye, to what now has the pedigree to be described as a broadly accepted international norm, and one with the potential to evolve further into a rule of customary international law. But the starting point is not the finishing point, and for all that has been achieved we still have a long way to go in bedding down complete international acceptance of the R2P principle and giving it practical effect as new cases arise.

### **Consolidating the Solution**

There are at least five key tasks that confront us if R2P is to become both effectively consolidated as a global norm and effectively operational in practice.

*One: Hold the line against backsliding from the World Summit consensus.* The unanimous adoption of the R2P principles by the 2005 World Summit and the UN Security Council cannot be the high-water mark from which the tides recede. For whatever reason — embarrassment about their own behaviour, embrace of the concept but concern about its misuse, or ideological association of any intervention with neo-imperialism or neo-colonialism — there is a recurring willingness by a number of states to deflate or undermine the concept.

As I move around the world talking and writing on this subject I am constantly reminded how big a problem this still is, not least in our own Asian region, and how much persuasion there still needs to be. One graphic example occurred to me just two weeks ago in Sri Lanka when I gave a fairly cautiously expressed lecture on the subject only to be greeted by a hail of personal abuse, and reactions like this one from a Sinhalese nationalist paper:

"The so-called responsibility to protect is nothing but a license for the white man to himself intervene in the affairs of dark sovereign countries, whenever the white man thinks it fit to do so."

And, a little more alarmingly because it came not from a newspaper columnist but a very senior diplomat, just a couple of weeks before that, at the UN in New York, a head of mission from a major Arab-Islamic country told one of my staff that:

"The concept of the responsibility to protect does not exist except in the minds of Western imperialists".

The only way to confront these kinds of reactions is ongoing diplomatic and other advocacy efforts — in which civil society organizations must play a key role — to explain and defend the concept, with serious efforts being sustained over a number of years to enshrine R2P principles in relevant international, regional and national institutions and forums beyond the UN.

A key part of the enterprise must be to develop a better understanding by policymakers of just what 'R2P situations' are. If they are perceived as extending across the full range of human rights violations by governments against their own people, or all kinds of internal conflict situations, it will be difficult to build and sustain any kind of consensus for action: we will find ourselves rapidly back in the area of North governments worrying about how to justify foreign entanglements where no vital national interests seem to be immediately involved, and South governments being concerned about their sovereignty being at risk of interventionary over-reach. 'R2P situations' must be seen only as those actually or potentially involving large-scale killing, ethnic cleansing or other similar mass atrocity crimes — situations where these crimes are either occurring or appear to be imminent, or which are capable of deteriorating to this extent in the absence of preventive action — and which should engage the attention of the international community because of their particularly conscience-shocking character.

Burundi is a good example of what I mean. Since the early 90s it has been a clear example of what we would now call an 'R2P situation', but it has not been badged as such, and it would be helpful in winning support for the concept if it was. The situation there was certainly capable of deteriorating into the kind of large scale genocidal violence that wracked neighbouring Rwanda, and it is arguably only the intense engagement of many international actors — including among others Nelson Mandela with his mediation, South Africa with its troop presence, the International Crisis Group with our analysis and advocacy, and the new Peacebuilding Commission with its making of Burundi its first case — that has prevented that occurring.

One of the most difficult and confusing cases to stay clear-headed about is Iraq. Looked at against the criteria I have outlined, Iraq in 2003, at the time of the coalition invasion, was *not* an R2P situation, however much Tony Blair and some others wanted to argue to the contrary. Although there were clearly major human rights violations continuing to occur (which justified international concern and response, eg, by way of censure and sanctions), and although mass atrocity crimes had clearly occurred in the past (against the Kurds in the late 80s and the southern Shiites in the early 90s) such crimes were neither actually occurring nor apprehended when the coalition invaded the country in early 2003.

By contrast, as I have already suggested at the outset, I do think it proper to characterise the situation in Iraq now, in August 2007, as an R2P one, because there is every reason to fear that — particularly in the context of a precipitate withdrawal of foreign forces from the centre and north of the country (where the argument for a significant continuing presence is much stronger than in the south) — that the present situation, bad as it is, will rapidly deteriorate into massive outbreak of communal and sectarian violence and ethnic cleansing beyond the capacity of the Iraqi government to control, and from which it would be unconscionable for the wider world to stand aloof.

*Two: Protect the integrity of the R2P concept.* The language in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the World Summit Outcome Document was the product of delicate negotiations to address the concerns of all UN members, including the need for a tool-box of non-military measures for prevention and the application of R2P only to the atrocity crimes,

and the need for clear criteria to be met before invoking R2P. If the R2P concept is to win genuine universal consensus, and become effectively operational, it is critical that it not be seen either too narrowly, as only about non-consensual military intervention, or too widely, as a synonym for addressing all global ills broadly related to human security (e.g. protecting people from HIV/AIDS, climate change, or the proliferation of nuclear weapons or small arms).

It remains a particularly common misperception to think of R2P as involving only military intervention. Overwhelmingly, the action it requires is preventive — building state capacity, remedying grievances, ensuring the rule of law and the like. If prevention fails, R2P situations do then require reactive measures, but it is only in the last resort — and when a whole series of other prudential criteria are satisfied, as discussed in a moment — that these should involve non-consensual military force: persuasion and coercion can take many forms short of this, including political pressure, diplomatic isolation, economic sanctions and legal threats (including prosecution in the new International Criminal Court).

In Darfur, for example, the fact that cooler judgment has, in my view correctly so far, militated against coercive military intervention (in particular because of the destructive impact this would have on the huge humanitarian relief effort in the west, and on the very fragile north-south peace compact) does not mean that this is a case of 'R2P failure' — it just means that the international responsibility to protect the people of Darfur against the incapacity or ill-will of the Sudan government has to take other forms, including the application of sustained diplomatic, economic and legal pressure to change the cost-benefit balance of the regime's calculations.

*Three: Clarify the limits of military action, spelling out the circumstances in which non-consensual military force can and cannot be used consistent with R2P principles.* While R2P is about much more than military force, this will always be its most controversial and sensitive aspect. To minimize the potential for misuse, and maximize the chances of consensus, it is important that — as recommended by the Canadian ICISS Commission, the High Level Panel and the Secretary-General in their respective reports — a set of prudential criteria be adopted as guidelines by the Security Council: the seriousness of the harm being threatened; the motivation or primary purpose of the proposed military action; whether reasonable peaceful alternatives are reasonably available; the proportionality of the response; and the balance of consequences — whether overall more good than harm would be done by a military intervention.

*Four: Build capacity within international institutions, governments, and regional organizations.* If R2P is not to remain more theoretical than real, we must somehow solve the problem of capacity, ensuring that the right civilian and, as necessary, military resources are always there in the right amounts and with the appropriate capability. And that means having readily available a set of responses that are somewhere between Doing Nothing and Sending in the Marines. In particular:

- We need stronger early warning coordination and response machinery at the centre, to ensure that we never again have early warnings fall into the black hole of indifference that confronted General Dallaire in 1994. And effective mechanisms of this kind are needed not just at the UN.
- We need effective diplomatic capacity ready and available to negotiate and mediate those situations which are capable of being stopped by effective early intervention of this kind.
- We need a repertoire of carefully thought-through sanctions measures, with an effective, professionally resourced, mechanism ready to be put in place immediately to monitor the application and effectiveness of those sanctions.
- We need a full range of civilian capabilities, especially effective policing, on permanent standby, with the capacity to be immediately deployed.
- We also need effective preparedness to mount military operations for civilian protection purposes - with the consent if at all possible of the government in question (as was the case in East Timor, for example, and has been the case with the limited forces so far sent to Darfur), but in really extreme cases, if there is no other way of protecting the people in question from slaughter and ethnic cleansing, without that consent.
- This means appropriate force configuration, together with new doctrine, new kinds of rules of engagement, and new kinds of training. Until now the task has been almost completely neglected by the world's militaries of developing detailed concepts of these R2P/civilian protection operations, which involve neither traditional war-fighting (where the object is not to stop violence as such, but to defeat an enemy) nor peacekeeping operations (which although these days usually involving much more than the traditional passive monitoring, have still not come to grips with the kind of responses needed to cope with the threat or reality of atrocity crimes).

*Five: Have in place the mechanisms and strategies necessary to generate an effective political response as new R2P situations arise.* Political will must be generated not only to put in place capacity-building measures, but to respond urgently and effectively to new crisis situations as they arise. This involves having mobilization capacity at two levels: first, top-down, to persuade key officials in key governments, regional organizations and international institutions, including the UN Security Council, to take the necessary action; and secondly, bottom-up, to ensure that the voices of ordinary concerned citizens are heard in the corridors of power, using all the resources and physical and moral energy of civil society organizations around the world.

At the moment it is not really anyone's day-job anywhere — not in the UN, not in the EU, not even in NGOs like my own — to think and write and advocate full-time about how to meet these various challenges. With this in mind, to fill this gap, I and senior colleagues at the International Crisis Group have been working with like-minded NGOs, including Human Rights Watch and Oxfam, and governments, to establish a new 'Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect', based in New York, but with a strong North-South character and outreach, to work on just these issues — to be, in short, a resource

base and catalyst for ongoing activity worldwide by NGOs, governments and key international organizations.

There *is* goodwill out there, in the wider community (as we have seen from the global opinion poll I mentioned earlier), and among government policymakers and decision-makers around the world. There *is* a basic willingness to accept and embrace the R2P concept, and to ensure – not just as a matter of national self-interest but as a function of our common humanity — that we don't ever again have to confront failures of will and action on the scale of Rwanda or Srebrenica. But we know from long, hard, depressing experience that mobilizing that goodwill, and actually producing the necessary action, are not things that just happen. They have to be *made* to happen, and that means citizen and professional voices like your own, all over the world, being *heard* by the policymakers that matter in every country in the world including our own.