

# THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT AT 10:

Progress, Challenges  
and Opportunities in the Asia Pacific

Phnom Penh, Cambodia 26-27 February 2015



Australian Government  
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THE UNIVERSITY  
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AP R2P  
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INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

# DETAILED conference REPORT

## The Responsibility to Protect at 10: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities in the Asia Pacific

Sofitel Phnom Penh, 26-27 February 2015



## Executive summary

In the 10 years since its adoption by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) has become a central part of the way we think about, and respond to, genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. R2P has progressed farthest in its normative development, and it is now a well-established political norm: there is little doubt that R2P has been making states more aware of their protection responsibilities.

That R2P has largely won the battle of ideas about whether the community of states should protect populations from atrocity crimes, and the most appropriate framework for doing so is evident not just in the avalanche of resolutions and government statements, but in practice too. Yet the pace of its domestic implementation has been more halted.

A key conclusion of the R2P at 10 Conference held in Phnom Penh 26-27 February 2015 is that problems today lay not in the acceptance of the norm but in its implementation. The key role governments, regional institutions, civil society, R2P focal points and even individuals play in leading domestic implementation efforts was resonantly affirmed across the fifteen sessions of this two-day conference that gathered representatives and speakers from all these constituencies working across most countries in Asia and beyond.

Regional organizations have an important role to play in preventing genocide and mass atrocities. For this reason, a deeper partnership between the UN and the Asia Pacific region is needed. ASEAN is well placed to prevent atrocities because it already has the relevant mechanisms at its disposal, and R2P norms can be readily embedded in the existing institutional and administrative arrangements. A first step to progress such partnership would be for the ASEAN Regional Forum to host a regional dialogue on R2P and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Efforts to mainstream the R2P principle in ASEAN should be informed by the recommendations of the 2014 High Level Advisory Panel on R2P in Southeast Asia (HLAP), and could be led by Cambodia.

To support the role of regional organizations in implementing R2P, governments are urged to appoint National Focal Points, prioritize dialogue between ASEAN and the UN, and undertake training of ASEAN officials to support R2P.

## Grounding the principle in local values and cultures is the best way of embedding it within communities. This is how we will continue the work of translating R2P from words into deeds.

The recent R2P at 10 Conference also reaffirmed there is widespread support for the UN Secretary-General's view that prevention should lie at the heart of R2P. Conference presenters stressed that more needs to be done to demystify R2P through training and education. Grounding the principle in local values and cultures is the best way of embedding it within communities so as to continue the work of translating R2P from words into deeds.

Calls for prevention efforts to lead the implementation agenda were led by many of the presenters gathered in Phnom Penh. In reinforcing the link between women's empowerment and preventing gendered violence in conflict, the conference heard conclusive arguments for violence against women (VAW) to be incorporated into the ambit of R2P, and for the need to have a clearer regional focus on the protection of women and girls in situations of armed conflict. The concrete demand for a regional symposium on the protection of women and girls in armed conflict is one of the recommendations of the conference.



**Prof. Mely Caballero-Anthony**

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia: High Level Advisory Panel on R2P

## As R2P and other agendas such as human security, human rights and counter-terrorism continue to converge, we should do more to emphasize the moral imperative underlying the Responsibility to Protect.

Though universal in aspiration, efforts to implement R2P must be local in articulation. The call to 'localize' the principle was led by several speakers in the course of the two-day conference. Presenters warned that the success of practitioners and advocates in implementing the principle of R2P is predicated on their ability to relate it to past experiences and otherwise localizing the principle through initiatives to deal with past atrocity crimes such as public education programs, truth and reconciliation commissions, or museums.

Likewise, success in implementing R2P is tied to incorporating the lessons of earlier invocations of the R2P principle, including the controversies surrounding the NATO-led intervention in Libya.

The theme of developing the human skills needed to identify risks and prevent mass atrocities was a recurrent one in the conference. It was discussed in relation to prevention initiatives, as well as through the value of the global network of R2P focal points. By supporting political will and coordinating national approaches to implementing R2P, public servants and diplomats who serve as focal points play a crucial role in advancing domestic implementation.

In the years ahead energies should be focused on domestic implementation of the R2P principle by supporting the work of:

1. National R2P Focal Points, which support political will and coordinate national approaches to implementing R2P.
2. Civil society organizations that help build awareness of R2P and set up the institutions states need to implement the principle.
3. International institutions, with particular attention to furthering cooperation on peacekeeping and human rights, as well as track two initiatives that seek to develop networks of individuals and organizations dedicated to atrocity prevention.

As R2P enters its second decade, human security and R2P should be recognized as mutually reinforcing in many respects, and more should be done to build on the linkages between them. The last decade has seen a growing convergence between R2P and other agendas such as human security, human rights and counter-terrorism. There is now broad agreement that more ought to be done to re-emphasize the moral imperative underlying the Responsibility to Protect. The R2P at 10 Conference heard specific calls for greater attention to be paid to international assistance, and to satisfying demands for justice in the wake of genocide and mass atrocities.



In outlining the challenges ahead, speakers addressed concerns that the broadening of consensus on R2P had resulted in a more shallow principle characterized by its least objectionable elements. The success of R2P so far is part of this story. Indeed, states are now more prepared to support the UN Secretary General on R2P that they were a decade ago, when the R2P resolution was adopted by the United Nations World Summit. And yet states have delayed backing their stated support with a proportional investment of resources. In response to such specific challenges, many of the recommendations following from the Phnom Penh conference specifically target implementation.

Other challenges identified for the norm in the years medium term is the need for sustaining high-level commitment to R2P in the coming leadership transitions in the UN and US, with a new UN Secretary-General and a new US President scheduled to commence their terms in January 2017.

Another priority is for the R2P principle to deal with non-state armed groups, especially those that advance sectarian agendas, and how to relate R2P with the counter-terrorism agenda.

## There should be a clearer regional focus on the protection of women and girls in situations of armed conflict.

The role of civil society organizations in building capacity for R2P deserves special mention, given the widely acknowledged role these organizations play in driving domestic implementation. Speakers from across Southeast Asia highlighted the role of civil society in raising awareness of R2P, encouraging and assisting governments and parliamentarians to implement the norm, and facilitating cooperation within and between countries.

A concrete recommendation in this respect is for the ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation to develop a regional early warning mechanism and strengthen preventive diplomacy and mediation.

More than 50 representatives from government, international organizations and NGOs articulated a series of opportunities and challenges for the future of R2P, which included:

- Translating the global commitment to preventing genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity into practical policies and strategies.
- Matching the commitments made to protect populations with the resources necessary to achieve that goal, including in relation to the resourcing of peacekeeping operations tasked with protecting civilians.

- Protecting against the misuse of R2P and preserving the global consensus.
- Strengthening the International Criminal Court to challenge impunity.
- Enhancing South-South dialogue and cooperation on issues related to R2P.
- Demystifying R2P by making early warning and assessment a normal part of global politics and persuading states to ask for assistance.



The R2P at 10 conference was hosted by the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (AP R2P) in partnership with the Cambodian Institute for Co-operation and Peace (CICP), The Stanley Foundation, the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GRtoP), and the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP). The Conference was held on 26-27 February 2015 at the Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra, to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the unanimous adoption of the R2P principle at the World Summit in 2005.

The conference combined dialogue about how far R2P has come with detailed consideration of how the principle's three pillars can continue to be embedded into state practice and into the work of regional and sub-regional organizations, working in partnership with each other and the UN.

The conference consisted of a series of plenary keynote speeches by leaders from the UN and the region, and 10 roundtable sessions focused on specific policy questions. Participants included a total of 51 invited speakers and more than 200 delegates including UN and governmental leaders, R2P Focal Points, diplomats and officials from the Asia Pacific region, eminent experts on R2P, and prominent civil society representatives.

# Recommendations

## General

- The second decade of R2P should focus on translating the political commitment to R2P into a lived reality for populations in need.
- There is a need for global strategy to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
- Human security and R2P are mutually reinforcing in many respects, and more should be done to build on the linkages between them.
- More work is needed to identify and operationalize the *individual* responsibility to protect.
- Training and education aimed at demystifying R2P should be a key priority.
- The Global Network of R2P Focal Points should deepen and intensify dialogue between focal points.
- It should be recognized that improving human rights and tackling gender discrimination are important elements of implementing R2P.
- Peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction are important components of the responsibility to prevent mass atrocities and should be given greater emphasis, as should guaranteeing non-recurrence.
- Parliamentarians ought to be better engaged in R2P as they are important conduits between national populations, governments and international actors.

## For the Asia Pacific region

- States should sign and ratify relevant international legal instruments relating to the protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Where appropriate, complementary domestic legislation should be adopted.
- Governments should consider appointing a senior official as National R2P Focal Point.
- The values and goals of R2P should be embedded within local cultures and value systems.
- A deeper partnership between the UN and the Asia Pacific region is needed for atrocities prevention



- It is important to build national constituencies of groups and individuals working nationally and locally to implement R2P.
- The ASEAN Regional Forum should consider hosting a regional dialogue on R2P and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
- There should be a regional symposium on the protection of women and girls in armed conflict.
- Governments and other organizations should mainstream R2P in their training curricula, especially in the security sector.

## For ASEAN

- ASEAN Member States should initiate a dialogue on the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities and protection of vulnerable populations, which could be led by Cambodia.
- ASEAN should establish a partnership with the UN to promote R2P in Southeast Asia.
- The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) should consider undertaking a thematic study on the human rights implication of genocide and mass atrocity prevention.
- AICHR should consider the need to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity when it revises its Terms of Reference.
- The ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation should develop a regional early warning mechanism and strengthen preventive diplomacy and mediation.



# Background

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle was adopted unanimously by the United Nations World Summit in 2005. Through it, UN Member States committed to protecting their own populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and to working together to prevent these crimes and protect populations from them.

In partnership with the Cambodian Institute for Co-operation and Peace (CICP), The Stanley Foundation, the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GRtoP), and the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (AP R2P) held a major Conference in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 26-27 February 2015 to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the unanimous adoption of this important principle.

The Conference promoted fresh thinking and dialogue about the progress made thus far in translating R2P from 'words into deeds', the challenges that have been confronted (especially in the Asia Pacific region) and the opportunities that lie ahead to facilitate efforts to make the R2P principle a 'lived reality' both in the region and globally.

The two-day conference combined dialogue about how far R2P has come with detailed consideration of

how to continue to embed the principle's three pillars into state practice and into the work of regional and sub-regional organizations, working in partnership with each other and the UN. The three pillars relate to the primary responsibility of the state, the international community's responsibility to assist states, and the international responsibility to take timely and decisive action when states fail to protect their own populations.

The conference comprised a series of plenary keynote speeches, including an historic address by Samdech Hun Sen, the Prime Minister of Cambodia who reaffirmed his country's commitment to R2P and undertook to take decisive steps to further its implementation by leaders from the UN and the region. The conference also featured roundtable sessions focused on specific policy questions. Through these sessions, conference participants identified the progress made thus far and the challenges that lay ahead and identified several concrete recommendations for R2P's second decade.

This report summarises some of the main points raised by participants at each of the conference sessions, and identifies some of the principal insights and recommendations emerging from the event.



# Day One

## Conference Opening:

### Prime Minister Hun Sen: Cambodia can take the lead in ASEAN

Launching the international conference in Phnom Penh to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of R2P, the Cambodian Prime Minister, Hun Sen, noted that he ‘would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm Cambodia’s commitment to the Responsibility to Protect’. He observed that while the UN Charter affirmed the sovereignty of states, ‘it is also important to acknowledge that the exercise of sovereign rights carries with it certain obligations or responsibilities’. In that regard, R2P ‘should be viewed as deepening the meaning of sovereignty in that it underscores the importance of

states taking seriously their primary responsibility to protect their people against genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing’.

Cambodia has already done much to deliver on its Responsibility to Protect. Prime Minister Hun Sen noted that in addition to overseeing the country’s positive transformation, the government of Cambodia had signed and ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, established the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, established the Tuol

Sleng Genocide Museum, adopted domestic laws against the denial of genocide and war crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge, and launched a Second National Action Plan to prevent and respond to violence against women. Importantly, Cambodia has become a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, many of which have mandates to protect civilians.

Prime Minister Hun Sen deepened Cambodia's commitment to preventing genocide and mass atrocities, setting out an inspired vision of national and regional action.

First, the Prime Minister promised that 'Cambodia will continue to encourage other members of ASEAN to consider signing and ratifying the Rome Treaty' of the International Criminal Court. This could be 'an important milestone for ASEAN as a community', he said.

Second, noting the recommendations of the High Level Advisory Panel on R2P in Southeast Asia, the Prime Minister indicated that Cambodia would initiate 'a regional dialogue on mass atrocities prevention in an effort to mainstream the R2P principle in ASEAN'.

Third, the Prime Minister noted that Cambodia could 'serve as an important hub for education and training in ASEAN on mass atrocities prevention' and called on the region's external partners to support this effort.

Fourth, Prime Minister Hun Sen proposed that Cambodia could be the main coordinator of ASEAN–UN partnership 'in promoting R2P in Southeast Asia'. Such a partnership, he suggested, could focus on training and supporting national and regional mechanisms for early warning to manage risk factors that could lead to mass atrocities.

Fifth, he said that the Cambodian government would take steps in the coming months to appoint a National R2P Focal Point and proposed that it could 'take the lead in proposing a network of R2P focal points in ASEAN'.

Thus, Prime Minister Hun Sen recognized that the R2P principle complements ASEAN's own aspirations and that R2P stems not just from the UN, but from the commitments that ASEAN Member States have made to each other. As such, R2P provides ASEAN with a pathway towards realizing its vision of a caring and sharing community in Southeast Asia and supports ASEAN's responsibility to care for the protection of its own people.

So far several ASEAN member states have signaled their support for R2P principles of protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and preventing these crimes in the UN. Prime Minister Hun Sen's bold vision set out a clear plan of action for both Cambodia and the region that builds on existing support for R2P across Southeast Asia.



## Australia: building partnerships, supporting R2P

The introduction to a statement by the Honorable Julie Bishop, Foreign Minister of Australia, highlighted the importance of preventing mass atrocity crimes and Australia's strong support for Cambodia's efforts to deal with its tragic past. The importance of making the international community's commitment to R2P a reality was also remarked upon.



**Hon. Julie Bishop**  
Australian Foreign Minister  
Australia is committed to the  
Responsibility to Protect

In her statement, Ms Bishop reaffirmed Australia's deep commitment to R2P and noted the steps taken to implement the principle, not least through Australia's work to support the governments of Afghanistan and Iraq, the focus on bringing attention to the human rights situation in North Korea, and support for regional efforts to promote peace and security.

## Assisting States to Fulfill their Responsibility to Protect

The first plenary session of the conference examined the collective responsibility of states to protect their own populations – the second pillar of R2P. The session featured a keynote address by Dr Jennifer Welsh, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect.

Dr Welsh stressed the challenge of translating R2P into a practical reality, especially the call to prevent genocide and mass atrocities. She reiterated the UN Secretary-General's approach to international assistance, focusing on the need to encourage states and their political leaders to fulfill their own responsibility, and the responsibility of the international community to support capacity building for atrocity prevention. Preventing atrocities goes beyond regular development assistance, concluded Dr Welsh.

Turning to Southeast Asia, Dr Welsh commended the work of the High Level Advisory Panel (HLAP) on R2P in Southeast Asia, and pointed delegates to the 2014 report of the Advisory Panel on *Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia: Pathway Towards a Caring ASEAN Community*. Dr Welsh stressed that the region had a story to tell others.



Dr Welsh reiterated the important role of post-conflict rebuilding in preventing future atrocities and establishing guarantees of non-recurrence. In her capacity as Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General on R2P, Dr Welsh emphasized that regional organizations have an important role to play, as do individuals, in implementing R2P.

The keynote address was followed by brief remarks by discussants from the Asia Pacific region. All the discussants welcomed the focus on assistance to governments and capacity building.

### The responsibility of the international community to support capacity building for atrocity prevention goes beyond regular development assistance.

The connection between the second pillar of R2P and broader concepts of human security was first raised in the session, and reiterated over the course of the next two days. Both R2P and human security tackle the root causes of genocide and mass atrocities, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding.

Speakers also discussed the importance of bringing perpetrators of past crimes to justice and establishing the rule of law as critical determinants in the path to non-recurrence.

In particular, R2P's second pillar and human security can come together in relation to:

1. International development programs focused on peacebuilding and good governance;
2. Civilian assistance to countries, such as the International Monitoring Team in Mindanao;
3. Dealing with past atrocity crimes, such as the Tuol Sleng Museum and the Timor-Leste Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation.

The discussants of Dr Welsh's keynote address reiterated their support for the UN Secretary-General's view that prevention should lie at the heart of R2P. They urged more to be done to demystify R2P through training and education, as well as by grounding the principle in local values and cultures. Embedded the R2P principle within communities can be done by relating it to past experiences and otherwise localizing the principle through concrete initiatives to deal with past atrocity crimes.

The controversy surrounding the NATO-led intervention in Libya were raised in this session, with speakers noting that future efforts to implement R2P should incorporate the lessons of that case.

## Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia: National Commitments, Regional Aspirations

The second plenary session featured members of the High Level Advisory Panel (HLAP) on the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia.

The two key points emerging from this session are that:

- R2P has been endorsed by the UN, and
- R2P is consistent with ASEAN values and international law.

Speakers agreed that since ASEAN was established to create a peaceful society in Southeast Asia, preventing genocide and other mass atrocities are firmly within the scope of the organization. In the years ahead, greater attention should be paid to the principle's second pillar, which focuses on international assistance, and to satisfying demands for justice in the wake of genocide and mass atrocities.

In the ensuing discussion about how to best implement the principle in the Southeast Asian region, there was broad acceptance that efforts to implement the principle of R2P should first and foremost aim to demystify R2P through raising public awareness and understanding, drawing on past experiences and 'localizing' the principle within the region.

The international community should then focus on preventing atrocity crimes, and ASEAN is well placed to prevent these acts because it already has the relevant mechanisms at its disposal. To support these prevention goals, governments are urged to appoint National R2P Focal Points, call for dialogue between ASEAN and the UN, and invest in training ASEAN officials to support R2P.



**Ambassador Kak-soo Shin**  
Korea National Diplomatic Academy

Regional organizations have an important role to play in preventing genocide and mass atrocities.

If training and education are key to demystifying R2P, regional organizations can play a pivotal role in furthering efforts in this regard, as well as in strengthening partnerships between regional organizations and the UN.



**Mr Rafendi Djamin**  
Indonesia's representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)

## Preventing Atrocities and Protecting the Vulnerable: Progress and Challenges after 10 Years of R2P

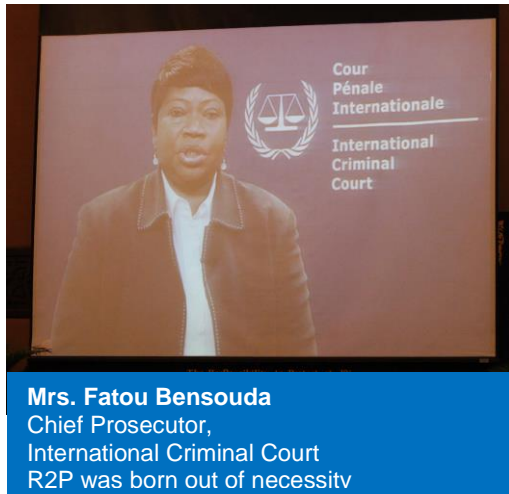
The third plenary session took a more global approach to evaluating R2P in its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The session opened with a powerful statement by Fatou Bensouda, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, who argued that the success of R2P would ultimately depend on the ability of the international community to implement the principle consistently, firmly and fairly. She told the participants, 'our resolve must endure'.

Turning to the key challenges and questions facing R2P, some expressed concern that broadening of consensus on R2P had resulted in a more shallow principle characterized by its least objectionable elements. Such challenges are evidence of the success of R2P; evidence that R2P has won the battle of ideas about whether the community of states should protect populations from atrocity crimes.

He raised the point that states are now more prepared to support the UN Secretary General on R2P that they were at the time that the R2P resolution was adopted by the UN World Summit in 2005. Still, the fact remains that states have delayed backing their stated support with a proportional investment of resources.

In the coming decade, proponents of R2P will tackle some key political challenges:

1. Maintaining broad political acceptance of R2P without losing its edge. R2P has an aspirational quality which should not be lost as the associated practice develops.
2. Sustaining high-level commitment to R2P during the coming leadership transitions in the UN and US (a new UN Secretary-General and a new US President will commence their terms in January 2017).
3. Acknowledging the inevitable selectivity evident in the way that states apply the R2P norm.
4. Facing situations that are morally ambiguous due to the commission of atrocity crimes by multiple armed groups in a conflict (as in Central African Republic).
5. Evaluating whether R2P activism is making a difference. Whilst R2P has progressed conceptually, there is less evidence to indicate that this is translating into better outcomes on the ground.
6. Dealing with non-state armed groups, especially those that advance sectarian agendas, and how to relate R2P with the counter-terrorism agenda.
7. Understanding and promoting the individual responsibility to protect, recognizing that the fate of populations often lies in the choices made by individuals.



The growing convergence between R2P and other agendas such as human security, human rights and counter-terrorism was acknowledged. The session heard persuasive arguments for more to be done to re-emphasize the moral imperative underlying R2P at a time when R2P faces noteworthy risks, as well as critical opportunities for the further strengthening of the norm.

But R2P is not just a norm. It is a powerful policy tool that has come a long way in its first decade, gaining wide acceptance by the international community and currently being mainstreamed in the UN system.

There is little doubt that R2P has been making states more aware of their protection responsibilities and that the problems today lay not in the acceptance of the norm but in its implementation.

The conclusion that implementation of R2P is most effective when the UN and regional organizations work in partnership with each other was shared by presenters and audience in this panel.

## The Experience of Genocide: Lessons from Cambodia

The fourth plenary session, hosted by the Cambodian Institute of Cooperation and Peace, focused on Cambodia's experience of genocide and its aftermath. The two speakers were genocide survivors and offered important insights about the Cambodian genocide.

A more detailed account of Cambodia's experience under the Khmer Rouge set the scene for a discussion of the pernicious ideology that underpinned the. Four decades later, Cambodia remains at risk of civil war owing to deep divisions within society.

Cambodia's experience highlights lessons relevant to efforts to implement the R2P principle:

1. isolationist countries are at heightened risk of genocide;
2. transitional periods are especially dangerous;
3. military intervention to end genocide is sometimes necessary;
4. economic sanctions can be counterproductive.

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Participants enjoyed a dinner hosted by the Stanley Foundation, at which the Honorable Prof. Gareth Evans gave an address on the subject of "R2P: Looking Forward, Looking Back".

# Day Two

## Building National Architecture on Mass Atrocities Prevention and the Role of National R2P Focal Points

This session focused on the role of National R2P Focal Points and combined presentations from focal points from the Asia Pacific and Africa. This session was organized by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCRtoP), which hosts the secretariat for the global network of R2P Focal Points.

The session began with a restatement of the importance of the role of focal points for participating in global decision-making in R2P and coordinating national efforts to build peace and avoid recurrence of violence and mass atrocities. Focal points enable cooperation on prevention by raising sensitive issues in a less coercive fashion, and raising awareness of R2P within governments.

The global network of R2P focal points is a key resource for advancing the implementation of R2P, and this calls for more regular dialogue between focal points. Regional and sub-regional arrangements can be instrumental in efforts to advance states' awareness of their protection responsibilities by ensuring that

R2P is implemented in a manner consistent with regional interests and values.

Focal points can help states enhance their participation in global debates about R2P, including through the Group of Friends of R2P and the UN's Human Rights Council. In calling for the development of domestic capacity to prevent genocide and mass atrocities, it is worth noting the variety of ways in which states can implement R2P, for example through work on the UN Security Council, support for regional initiatives, and development of the human skills needed to identify risks and prevent mass atrocities, as in the example of Australia.

National R2P Focal Points are a key dimension of implementation because they support political will and coordinate national approaches to implementing R2P.

The ensuing discussion touched on the experiences of national R2P Focal Points, as well as the various functions that they can perform: supporting national efforts to prevent genocide and mass atrocities, reducing communal tensions, coordinating government action, and helping to facilitate international collaboration.

Public servants  
and diplomats who serve  
as focal points advance domestic  
implementation by supporting  
political will and coordinating  
national approaches  
to implementing R2P



## The Roles of Civil Society in Implementing the Responsibility to Protect

The theme of domestic implementation was taken up again in a session exploring the many roles that civil society organizations play in implementing R2P. This panel was hosted by the International Coalition on the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP).



**Dr Noel Morada**  
Director  
Regional Diplomacy and Capacity Building  
Asia-Pacific Centre for the  
Responsibility to Protect

Civil society organizations are crucial for building capacity for R2P. In particular, civil organizations help to raise awareness of R2P, encourage and assist governments and parliamentarians to implement the norm, and facilitate cooperation within and between countries. The conference learnt about some of the practical ways in which civil

society organizations support peacemaking in Mindanao and broader R2P goals through, for example, facilitating ceasefires, monitoring accountability, dissipating prejudices, facilitating inter-communal dialogue, and delivering services. These insights were reinforced by reference to protection issues in Myanmar, where NGOs undertake work that contributes to civilian protection: documenting past atrocities, empowering women to monitor their own communities and recognize abnormal behaviors, holding government officials accountable, and de-stigmatizing the victims of rape.

In crediting the work of civil society organizations, the session examined some of the key challenges and pitfalls, observing that efforts to empower women can create backlashes from male members of their own communities and that the quest for funds can lead to donor-driven agendas at odds with local needs and preferences.

As the session drew to a close, speakers reaffirmed the need for civil society organizations to help build awareness of R2P and the institutions states need to implement the principle, particularly in the wake of atrocities. Representatives from civil society organizations from across the region reiterated the conclusion from previous discussions, namely: that delays in implementing the principle stem not from the lack of political support but from the need of governments to prioritize.

## Strengthening Women's Rights: Preventing Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict and Humanitarian Emergencies

This session opened with an important statement by Zainab Bangura, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Ms Bangura insisted that fostering gender equality is at the core of R2P because women face unique threats in situations of armed conflict; their rights are often violated, and women are often excluded from political processes and economic wealth.

Ms Bangura called on conference delegates to focus on the threat of sexual violence and to ensure that women's human rights are respected in peacetime so that they are more likely to be protected in situations of armed conflict.



**Dr. Ma. Lourdes Veneración-Rallonza**  
Ateneo de Manila University  
and Consultation on the WPS National  
Action Plan, The Philippines



**Ms Mudjiati**

Deputy Minister for Women' Protection,  
Republic of Indonesia

Speakers in this panel presented a compelling case for prevention of gender-based violence and protection of vulnerable people to be incorporated into the ambit of R2P. Focusing on preventing such violence rather than waiting for it to become widespread or systematic before acting is a necessary part of this story.

In calling for a clearer regional focus on the protection of women and girls in situations of armed conflict, presenters reiterated that R2P and Women, Peace and Security complemented one another. Important progress has been made to advance the protection of women, including through the signing by eight ASEAN members of the global declaration against sexual violence. In the years ahead, governments should be prepared to invest resources to uphold the human rights of women and girls and implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

The Asia Pacific experiences relatively high levels of gender-based violence, which is best tackled through a multi-sectorial approach to reducing inequality, a focus on justice for past crimes, and a targeted approach to protecting vulnerable women by, for instance, establishing safe spaces (especially for displaced women), providing sensitive medical assistance, and ensuring that women play a key role in decision-making about their own futures.

The discussion then shifted towards three case-studies on the implementation of plans to prevent sexual and gendered violence:

- a. The National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in The Philippines
- b. Steps taken by the Indonesian government to reduce gender-based violence, including codifying the protection of women in national legislation, empowering women in conflict to build resilience and strengthen their participation in the economy, engaging women in post-conflict treatment, and promoting the prevention of violence through social conflict management.
- c. Cambodia's experiences with transitional justice mechanisms, including lessons learnt in dealing with sexual and gender-based violence in order to strengthen accountability. To date, gender-based violence had been a blind spot in the process.

## The Role of Regional Institutions in Implementing the Responsibility to Protect

It is now widely understood that regional organizations have an important role to play in implementing R2P. The speakers in this panel emphasized the work that regional arrangements are already undertaking in the Asia Pacific, and identified important opportunities for the future. Regional organizations have an especially important role to play in early warning and prevention. A case in point is the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), which has succeeded in starting elevated regional dialogue on human rights and presents opportunities for the further advancement of human rights in Southeast Asia. Cooperation on peacekeeping and human rights was identified as another way in which regional organizations could promote collaboration aimed at supporting the goals of R2P.

The significance of Prime Minister Hun Sen's opening speech was put forward as evidence of the deepening of the region's consideration of R2P. The Asia Pacific region is developing networks of individuals and organizations dedicated to atrocity prevention, including track two initiatives such as the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific Study Group on R2P, programs that involve the region's

parliamentarians, and opportunities that are emerging within the ASEAN context, especially through the AICHR and ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation.

## Training and Educating for Prevention

Training and education is commonly identified as a key priority for the future implementation of R2P. In this session, organizations involved in training and education for atrocities prevention – the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, the Asia Pacific Centre for R2P, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre and the United Nations – shared their insights on lessons learned, best practices and future opportunities.



**University of Queensland  
R2P Student Coalition executive**  
Amelia Nolan, Molly Frankham (President),  
Dominique Fraser (Past President),  
Grace Phibbs, James Turner

Besides deepening understanding of R2P, training and education projects have led to long-term partnerships; initiatives to engage with youth and emerging practitioners; and ensuring that training and education is a two-way process. In this way, research centers have been able to relate training to wider processes of regional and national dialogue.



**Prof. Sovachana Pou**  
Deputy Director - Research and Publications  
Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and  
Peace (CICP)

Five best practices for training and education were identified:

1. Developing courses in partnership with local actors by tailoring them to the particular needs of the partners and developing a 'training the trainers' mentality.
2. Using an interactive learning program focused on the development of key skills.
3. Connecting trainees with experts from their own region.
4. Utilizing the power of place by situating training close to areas that have experienced genocide and mass atrocities.
5. Following up with trainees by engaging with alumni.

The importance of building partnerships and cooperation, the need to learn lessons from past experiences, develop and integrate a conceptual approach to risk assessment, and build sustainable knowledge through interactive engagement were all highlighted as best practice for peacekeeping training in particular.



**Training and Educating for Prevention:  
Lessons Learned, Future Directions**  
Hosted by The Stanley Foundation



## Leveraging Domestic Institutions to Support Atrocity Prevention

The first plenary session of Day Two addressed the question of how existing national institutions might be utilized to support atrocity prevention efforts at home. A clear next step is for more to be done to build capacity across both state and non-state institutions, taking into account the specific challenges of ensuring protection when the state itself is either absent, ineffective or the perpetrator. A holistic concept of ‘protection capacity’ – the ability to mobilize community-based capacities when the state proves unable to fulfill its responsibilities – was advanced in this session. The approach to these questions needs to be tailored to each individual situation.

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) play a significant role in the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities by helping to build inclusive societies. NHRIs contribute to the goals of R2P in multiple ways: by responding to human rights concerns, promoting

accountability, supporting principles of equality before the law and making both populations and governments aware of human rights and of their importance.



**Dr Kwesi Aning**  
Director Academic Affairs and  
Research, Kofi Annan  
International Peacekeeping  
Training Centre

Speakers encouraged using existing laws and institutions for atrocity prevention purposes. States can build their own capacity to prevent atrocities for instance by adopting legislation, building anti-impunity norms, promoting multiculturalism, education and capacity building, national level early warning, human rights promotion. And international organizations have a role to play in supporting these initiatives and providing other types of support when national institutions fail to deliver.



**Ma. Loretta Ann P. Rosales**  
Chairperson  
Commission on Human Rights, Philippines  
National Human Rights Institutions and the  
Responsibility to Protect

**More ought to be done  
to build capacity across  
state and non-state  
institutions to ensure  
protection when  
the state itself is either  
absent, ineffective  
or the perpetrator**



## Concluding Session: R2P in the Next Decade

In the final session, the directors of each of the partner organizations responsible for the conference outlined their own assessment of how far R2P has come and where the future challenges and opportunities lie. They all agreed that R2P was an international norm that had come a long way in a relatively short period of time. Conceding that normative development was important, speakers underscored that the key element is the capacity of R2P to improve the protection of populations around the world. The question now is not *whether* to uphold R2P in crisis situations, but *how* to do so.



Presenters at the concluding session also agreed that states were developing and consolidating national and regional structures to support the implementation of R2P.

The key opportunities and challenges for the future were identified as being:

- Translating the global commitment to preventing genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity into practical policies and strategies.
- Matching the commitments made to protect populations with the resources necessary to achieve that goal, including in relation to resourcing of peacekeeping operations tasked with protecting civilians.
- Protecting against the misuse of R2P and preserving the global consensus.
- Strengthening the International Criminal Court to challenge impunity.
- Enhancing South-South dialogue and cooperation on issues related to R2P.
- Demystifying R2P by making early warning and assessment a normal part of global politics and persuading states to ask for assistance.

## Conclusions

In the course of the conference participants reiterated two core points:

1. R2P is now accepted by UN Member States. The challenge for the coming decade is to implement this norm.
2. R2P is implemented most effectively when the UN, regional organizations and individual states work together.

# The Responsibility to Protect at 10: In their own words

## Resources and Conference Materials

### *Speeches*

[Keynote Address](#) by **Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia**, to the Conference on the Responsibility to Protect at 10: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities in the Asia Pacific, under the theme "Cambodia Takes the Leading Role in Prevention of Genocide in ASEAN"

[Keynote Dinner Address](#) by **Professor the Hon Gareth Evans AC QC**, Former Foreign Minister of Australia and Co-Chair of the International Commission on Intervention and States Sovereignty, to the Conference on the Responsibility to Protect at 10: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities in the Asia Pacific

[Concluding Session Remarks](#) by **Dr. Simon Adams**, Executive Director of the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

[Remarks](#) by **Professor Pou Sovachana**, CICP Deputy Director in Charge of Research and Publication, 'Promoting and Advancing the Responsibility to Protect in Cambodia: What Role for Academia?'

[Remarks](#) by **Ma. Loretta Ann P. Rosales**, Chairperson Commission on Human Rights, Philippines, 'National Human Rights Institutions and the Responsibility to Protect: Reflections from the Philippine Experience'



Question during a session on The Roles of Civil Society in Implementing the Responsibility to Protect.

## *Power Point Presentations*

**Presentation** by **Mr. Yang Yi**, Secretary-General, China Institute of International Studies

**Presentation** by **Dr. Sachiko Ishikawa**, Senior Advisor on Peacebuilding and South-South Cooperation, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), 'Can Human Security Contribute to Pillar II of R2P? in the context of Japan's Assistance to the Southeast Asia'

**Presentation** by **Ms. Yuyun Wahyuningrum**, Senior Advisor on ASEAN and Human Rights at the Human Rights Working Group- Indonesia, 'The Role of Civil Society in Advancing the Responsibility to Protect'

**Presentation** by **Professor Pou Sovachana**, CICP Deputy Director in Charge of Research and Publication, 'Promoting and Advancing the Responsibility to Protect in Cambodia: What Role for Academia?'

**Presentation** by **Ms. Devanna de la Puente**, Regional GBV Humanitarian Advisor, United Nations (Bangkok), 'Addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Humanitarian Situations in the Asia and the Pacific Region'

**Presentation** by **Ms. Mudjiati**, Deputy Minister for Women's Protection, Republic of Indonesia

**Presentation** by **Dr. Ma. Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza**, Ateneo de Manila University and Consultation on WPS National Action Plan, The Philippines, 'Mapping Collaborative initiatives on Women, Peace and Security in the Philippines and Exploring Institutional Entry Points for Women's Protection in Armed Conflict in the ASEAN'



## *Photos*

[R2P at 10 Conference Photo Album](#), 26-27 February 2015

## *Videos*

Video Message, "[The Responsibility to Protect: Born out of Necessity](#)", by **Mrs. Fatou Bensouda**, Chief Prosecutor, the International Criminal Court, to the Responsibility to Protect at 10 Conference, 26 February 2015

[Video Message](#) by **Ms. Zainab Bangura**, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, to the Responsibility to Protect at 10 Conference, 27 February 2015

**Prof Jennifer Welsh**, *Special Adviser to the UN Secretary- General on the Responsibility to Protect*: "[Assisting States to Fulfill Their Responsibility to Protect](#)"

**Ms Yuyun Wahyuningrum**, *Senior Advisor on ASEAN and Human Rights at the Human Rights Working Group – Indonesia*: '[The Role of Civil Society in Advancing the Responsibility to Protect](#)'

**Prof. Sovachana Pou**, *CICP Deputy Director in Charge of Research and Publication* '[Promoting and Advancing the Responsibility to Protect in Cambodia: What Role for Academia?](#)'

**Dr. Sophal Ear**, *Associate Professor (Tenured), Stuart Chevalier Department of Diplomacy & World Affairs, Occidental College, Los Angeles, US*  
"[Cambodia's R2P Experience in Comparative Perspective: Past, Present, and Future](#)"

**Dr. Sachiko Ishikawa**, *Senior Advisor on Peacebuilding and South-South Cooperation, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)*, [Presentation](#) on the 'Assisting States to Fulfill Their Responsibility to Protect' panel

**Ambassador Nguyen Duy Hung**, *former Ambassador of Viet Nam to Cambodia and Thailand* "[Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia: National Commitments, Regional Aspirations](#)" (Presentation of the Report of the High Level Advisory Panel on RtoP in Southeast Asia)

**Professor Alex Bellamy**, *Executive Director, Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*, [Closing Remarks](#)



**Panel on The Way Forward: R2P in the Next Decade**

Right to left: Ms. Shazalina Zainul Abidin (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia), Mr. Keith Porter (CEO and President, The Stanley Foundation), Mr. Pou Sothirak (Executive Director, Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace), Dr. Simon Adams (Executive Director, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect), Mr. William Pace (International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect) and Professor Alex Bellamy (Executive Director, Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect).

*In the News*

**The Phnom Penh Post**, 3 March 2015, [Cambodia can lead on R2P](#)

**The Cambodia Daily**, 27 February 2015, [Hun Sen Warns Of Civil War If ECCC Goes Beyond 'Limit'](#)

**Khmer Times**, 27 February 2015, [PM Blasts Former Australian Foreign Minister](#)

**The Phnom Penh Post**, 27 February 2015, [With friends like these](#)

*Social Media*

[R2P at 10: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities in the Asia-Pacific](#), Storify page by ICRtoP, 3 March 2015

*British High Commission in Canberra Essay Competition Winner*

[Essay](#) by **Aneto Peretko**, *How best can supporters promote the principle of Responsibility to Protect in Asia over the next 10 years, particularly in the campaign to prevent sexual violence in conflict?*





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