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# WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE UNITED NATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT DOCTRINE AND HOW CAN WE FIX IT?

Major P. Tony Singh

**JCSP 44**

***Exercise Solo Flight***

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# WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE UNITED NATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT DOCTRINE AND HOW CAN WE FIX IT?

## INTRODUCTION

The genocide and mass atrocities observed in Rwanda and Srebrenica produced outrage, disappointment and disgust within the international community as thousands were massacred with little to no action.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Kofi Annan, championed a movement after these tragedies, which would formalize a means by which the UN and the international community would “never again” fail to protect civilians from these types of crimes.<sup>2</sup> After many years, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine was established and widely supported by UN member states during the 2005 UN World Summit. Since that time, R2P has garnered much international attention, has evolved from an abstract principle to concrete actions and arguably has precipitated a normative shift throughout the world.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, since its conception, R2P has attracted much skepticism based on accusations that the doctrine lacks relevancy or is simply a means for powerful states to misuse their power to satisfy their self-interests. Frankly, R2P has failed to achieve its intended mandate due to three key impediments: a divisive and paralyzed UN Security Council, ideological differences amongst UN member states and insufficient capacity to implement R2P strategies. This paper will justify this claim by providing a brief overview of R2P's evolution, describing each of aforementioned challenges in detail and subsequently offering solutions that are required to alter R2P's downward trajectory.

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Luck. *The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect*, The Stanley Foundation. August 2008.

<sup>2</sup>Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*. United Nations Association – UK, 2013, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ramesh Thakur. “The Responsibility to Protect at 15,” *International Affairs* 92:2 (2016).

## **RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT: AN OVERVIEW**

After witnessing horrific atrocities throughout the 1990s, UN member nations collectively believed it to be imperative to establish a doctrine that would allow the international community to respond in certain circumstances to save lives or prevent human suffering.<sup>4</sup> During this time period, there were many examples of extreme violence within states, such as genocide in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in Burundi and mass killings in Srebrenica; illustrating a dire need for an international response within various sovereign states.<sup>5</sup> In particular, NATO's 1999 intervention in Kosovo, deemed "illegal, but legitimate," further highlighted this concern as external intervention was highly controversial.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the UN General Assembly responded to these events by establishing the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) to carefully examine these issues, formulate practical solutions and "find some new common ground."<sup>7</sup> In December 2001, the ICISS published its detailed report, which, for the first time, outlined the shared responsibility of sovereign states and the international community to protect civilians regardless of where they reside.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, this report further expanded on this concept by establishing three fundamental responsibilities including the responsibility to prevent, responsibility to react and responsibility to rebuilt.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, at the time of this intervention, there was significant debate within the international community on which circumstances required international response or intervention in the internal affairs of a state especially when the use of force is a chosen means of response.

<sup>7</sup> ICISS, *The responsibility to protect: report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*. International Development Research Centre, 2001, VII

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Vitor Fernandes. "Past, Present and Future of the Responsibility to Protect: A Bumpy Journey," *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 8, N<sup>o</sup>. 2, November 2017-April 2018.

During the UN World Summit in 2005, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, utilized the blueprint provided by the ICISS report to garner support and approval by the UN General Assembly for the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) doctrine.<sup>10</sup> According to the World Summit Outcome document, certain modifications were made to the ICISS recommendations to ensure the doctrine addressed key concerns and was approved by the UN General Assembly.<sup>11</sup> Most noteworthy, the approved R2P doctrine was deliberately “narrow” and thus was restricted to four specific crimes, which includes genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.<sup>12</sup> The years following the implementation of this novel doctrine, the UN struggled to operationalize R2P through concrete actions. Therefore, in 2009, the UN Secretary General published an essential report, entitled “Implementing the responsibility to protect,” which was Ben Ki-Moon’s attempt to transform R2P from “promise to practice, words into deeds.”<sup>1314</sup> Specifically, the report identified three “non-sequential” pillars to clarify the full scope of R2P and disassociate the belief that it was simply humanitarian intervention.<sup>15</sup> As outlined, pillar one focuses on the capacity that each state should possess to protect their populations from the four listed crimes and is seen as the “bedrock” of R2P.<sup>16</sup> Pillar two shifts focus to the responsibility of the international community to assist states in addressing their capacity deficiencies to prevent or stop crimes that are occurring within their states.<sup>17</sup> Finally, the third pillar includes both “hard” and “soft” measures that the international

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<sup>10</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*, 28.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations. “2005 World Summit Outcome Document Resolution.”

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 31.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations. “Implementing the Responsibility to Protect,” 1.

<sup>14</sup> Anne Orford. *International Authority and the Responsibility to Protect*. Cambridge University Press, 2011, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*, 12.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 12

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*

community can use to address state failures in protecting their citizens.<sup>1819</sup> The nuance in which the third pillar has been written is that the UN should respond when “national authorities” have “manifestly” failed in their protection duties, which is subjectively obscure.<sup>20</sup> Although there have been subsequent UN Secretary General reports on R2P, the focus has been on refining the means by which the largely unchanged R2P doctrine could be realized, which has proven to be considerably controversial.

R2P doctrine has been utilized many times since its inception in 2005 and has been successful in many cases. For example, the UN’s 2008 response in Kenya had provided a “timely response” that successfully neutralized anticipated wide-spread violence in the state.<sup>21</sup> Although positive, this experience is not a definitive proof of concept. Thus, the subsequent sections will elaborate on three main shortcomings of the doctrine and its negative impact on the implementation of R2P.

## **PRINCIPLE IMPEDIMENTS TO R2P**

### **Paralysis of the UNSC**

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been described as an overly bureaucratic, polarized and indecisive UN instrument that is, at times, incapable of making timely decisions on key resolutions.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the ICISS report attempted to address this key obstacle by recommending if the UNSC “rejects a proposal or fails to deal with it in a reasonable time,” that there should be “alternative options” available.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*.

<sup>19</sup> Justin Morris. “Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum,” *International Affairs* 89:5(2013), 1271.

<sup>20</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*. 10.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations. “Implementing the Responsibility to Protect,” 9.

<sup>22</sup> Charles Ziegler. “Contesting the Responsibility to Protect” *International Studies Perspectives* (2016) 17, 75-97.

<sup>23</sup> ICISS, *The responsibility to protect: report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*, XIII

These alternatives include adjudicating stalemates by the General Assembly or allowing regional organizations or states to intervene on their own volition.<sup>24</sup> As majority of UN member states did not agree with this recommendation, the official R2P doctrine reaffirmed the UNSC's role as the approving authority for R2P responses.<sup>25</sup> The UNSC is composed of permanent and non-permanent members whom collectively vote on proposed resolutions, such as approving economic sanctions or military intervention.<sup>26</sup> The five permanent members (P5) of the UNSC can all use their power of veto to prevent the approval of a resolution.<sup>27</sup> Specifically pertaining to R2P resolutions, the use of vetoes by P5 members have elicited strong opinions that assert that P5 states are abusing their positions to serve their national interests over the needs of the global community.<sup>28</sup>

Since the inception of R2P, numerous UNSC resolutions have referred to the four crimes outlined within the UN doctrine.<sup>29</sup> For example, in 2015, UNSC Resolution 2100 was approved by the UNSC; referring specifically to the "responsibility to protect civilians in Mali," which sanctioned MINUSMA.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, not all the R2P associated resolutions have been approved and in certain cases have led to inaction and

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<sup>24</sup> ICISS, *The responsibility to protect: report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*.

<sup>25</sup> United Nations. "2005 World Summit Outcome Document Resolution," 31, paragraph 139 refers to this by stating "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, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, 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."

<sup>26</sup> United Nations. "Main Organs."

<sup>27</sup> United Nations. "Charter of the United Nations," Article 27 of the UN Charter does not talk about a veto, but indicates that decisions must have "concurring votes of the permanent members;" P5 includes the following states: China, Russia, United States, France and United Kingdom.

<sup>28</sup> Charles Ziegler. "Contesting the Responsibility to Protect."

<sup>29</sup> Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. "R2P References in United Nations Security Council Resolutions and Presidential Statements."

<sup>30</sup> United Nations Peacekeeping. "MINUSMA," MINUSMA refers to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

subsequent human suffering and death.<sup>31</sup> For instance, the violence inflicted on the Syrian people since 2011 demonstrates, most clearly, how the veto power provided to the P5 may hinder a timely response to humanitarian issues.<sup>32</sup> Russia, along with China, has vetoed 11 proposed UNSC resolutions aimed towards minimizing the harm to civilians perpetrated by the Bashar Al-Assad regime.<sup>33</sup> Although none of these resolutions involved military intervention into Syria and mostly involved condemning the actions of Syria, Russia had opposed all of the resolutions.<sup>34</sup> In response to widespread criticism, Russia has provided “values-based narratives” for opposing these resolutions predicated on limiting external inference in a civil war and suggesting that intervention may deteriorate the situation further with subsequent reference to Libya.<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, this discourse is less than convincing considering Russia’s close ties with Syria, its preoccupation with Islamic insurgence in areas of national interest and its recent actions in South Ossetia and Crimea.<sup>36</sup> Despite over 190,000 civilians killed in Syria and millions displaced, no collective actions by the UN has taken place, which strongly suggests that international politics and “geopolitical rivalry” are taking primacy over adhering to the principles of R2P.<sup>37,38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. “R2P References in United Nations Security Council Resolutions and Presidential Statements.”

<sup>32</sup> Derek Averre and Lance Davis. “Russia, humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect: the case of Syria,” *International Affairs* 91:4 (2015).

<sup>33</sup> Security Council Report. “The Veto.”

<sup>34</sup> Derek Averre and Lance Davis. “Russia, humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect: the case of Syria.”

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 814

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, Russia is concerned that if Islamic insurgency is successful in Syria, this could spread to North Caucasus and impact its influence in this area.

<sup>37</sup> Kirsten Ainley. “The Responsibility to Protect and the International Criminal Court: Counteracting the Crisis,” *International Affairs* 91:1 (2015), 37-54.

<sup>38</sup> Derek Averre and Lance Davis. “Russia, humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect: the case of Syria,” 827



## **Opposed Ideologies vis-à-vis R2P**

Unanimous acceptance of R2P in 2005 meant that UN member states had agreed to “protect their populations” and support “collective action.”<sup>39</sup> Having said that, member states did not establish a consensus on how and in which circumstances R2P responsibilities should be operationalized.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, the international community has been divided on R2P, which continues to be a significant impediment to implementing a range of R2P related activities. Specifically, there is substantial polarization surrounding pillar three measures, with specific focus on certain “hard” coercive measures, such as the use of deployed forces.<sup>41</sup> Essentially, there are two predominant perspectives, one which stems from the Western, “pro-interventionist” nations and one which originates from former colonized, eastern, sovereigntist nations.<sup>42</sup> Many western nations, including France, US and UK continue to advocate for intervention in cases in which human security is at risk. Conversely, many non-western nations, including Russia, China, India and South Africa, express a more conservative approach to the application of R2P measures even if they do not involve military forces. Generally, the fundamental difference that is observed is that western nations believe in the primacy of the R2P principles whereas the other nations remain somewhat fixed that sovereignty of a nation is critical to global order and stability.<sup>43</sup> The latter is predicated on an ideology that “neo-colonial” powers favour coercive measures to advance their

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<sup>39</sup> United Nations. “2005 World Summit Outcome Document Resolution,” 31.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, the R2P doctrine is specific in terms of the four crimes, but is very vague on the events or circumstances that the international community should respond and therefore this ambiguity is a source of disagreement amongst UN member states.

<sup>41</sup> Justin Morris. “Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum,” *International Affairs* 89:5(2013), 1271.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 1274.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

own strategic interests and geopolitical ambitions.<sup>44</sup> In other words, “norm internalization” of R2P has not occurred within many states, which many have linked to “Washington’s selective application of R2P,” which has in many ways widened this divide or “heightened the hurdle.”<sup>4546</sup>

This divide was not only evident before the passage of UNSC Resolution 1973, but was further exacerbated following the NATO-led mission in Libya.<sup>47</sup> During the UNSC vote for Resolution 1973, out of the 15 nations that voted, there were five that abstained as they had strong reservations that the no-fly zone proposed could escalate into a full-scale military operation.<sup>48</sup> The resolution was not vetoed by any of the P5 nations, but this was likely the result of the significant support from certain regional organizations.<sup>49</sup> After the operation had been completed and the Qaddafi regime was overthrown, many nations led by Russia had expressed their displeasure on how the operation was conducted.<sup>50</sup> In essence, it was suggested that NATO inappropriately “morphed” the no-fly zone into an offensive military campaign that contribute to regime change and subsequent chaos throughout the country.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, the fear that R2P responses will be used by the West as a means to advance their own interests continues to inhibit progress on R2P. Additionally, the concern that “pillar creep” would occur by these nations prevents even benign resolutions from receiving the required support.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Charles Ziegler. “Contesting the Responsibility to Protect,” 83.  
<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 92.  
<sup>46</sup> Justin Morris. “Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum,” 1270.  
<sup>47</sup> Charles Ziegler. “Contesting the Responsibility to Protect,” UNSC Resolution 1973 authorized the use of force to protect civilians within Libya and specifically included an arms embargo and a no-fly zone.  
<sup>48</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>49</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>50</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 88.  
<sup>52</sup> Justin Morris. “Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum,” 1282.

## **Insufficient Political Will and Resources**

Although in 2009, the UN Secretary-General, Ben-Ki Moon had outlined the means by which R2P would be “operationalized,” the identified ambitious endeavours require immense political commitment and allocation of scarce resources.<sup>53</sup> Specifically, a number of strategies were identified, but the clear focus was on pillar one and two solutions while deemphasizing coercive pillar three measures.<sup>54</sup> For pillar one, states were to “sharpen the tools for ending impunity,” by ensuring they have internal mechanisms to prosecute any of the four R2P crimes.<sup>55</sup> This can be realized by adopting best practices from other nations, engaging in “state to state learning” and committing to training on human rights.<sup>56</sup> To address pillar two, the international community could implement many solutions, such as providing mediation services, assisting in surveillance tasks and enhancing “rapid-response civilian and police capacities.”<sup>57</sup> Most importantly, the international community can help states by building capacity based on the specific needs of the state, which, for example, could involve enhancing a state’s judiciary system and its rule of law.<sup>58</sup> Finally, pillar three requires a decisive response from the international community, which involves a spectrum of measures from non-coercive actions to the deployment of military resources.<sup>59</sup> Since the UN’s capabilities to support these initiatives are “weak, underdeveloped and resource starved,” these initiatives must almost entirely be resourced through member states or regional/sub-regional

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<sup>53</sup> Anne Orford. *International Authority and the Responsibility to Protect*, 17.

<sup>54</sup> United Nations. “Implementing the Responsibility to Protect.”

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*.

arrangement.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, when there is insufficient interest within a state or region, many states or organizations are hesitant to allocate scarce resources. In other words, political will is required for adequate investment of resources to support R2P initiatives. Furthermore, since many states are in the second stage of the norm lifecycle (norm diffusion) and have not fully accepted their responsibilities under R2P, there is an added reluctance to supporting R2P.<sup>61</sup>

Darfur is particularly illustrative of the inability of the UN to act when there is insufficient political will and, as a result, inadequate resources to effect change.<sup>62</sup> The violence that has inflicted Darfur since 2003 has resulted in over 250,000 deaths and at least 2 million displaced, but has resulted in a limited international response.<sup>63</sup> Even though since 2004, there have been several UNSC resolutions authorizing intervention missions to the nation, based on its limited geopolitical significance vis-à-vis most global powers, a limited troop presence was deployed.<sup>64</sup> More specifically, the United Nations Mission in Sudan and the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur both struggled to acquire a sufficient number of deployed troops and funding to carry out their established mandates.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, Darfur is just one example among many whereby the lack of resources has inhibited the international community from acting to prevent grave insults to human security.

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<sup>60</sup> Edward Luck. *The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect*, 6.

<sup>61</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International norm dynamics and political change", *International Organization* 52: 4 (1998).

<sup>62</sup> Ramesh Thakur. "The Responsibility to Protect at 15."

<sup>63</sup> Justin Morris. "Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum."

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Ramesh Thakur. "The Responsibility to Protect at 15."

## **IMPROVING R2P**

There are a plethora of potential solutions to address the identified shortfalls of the R2P doctrine and its implementation. Although consensus does not exist among foreign policy experts, there is agreement that the keys to improving R2P are through “better implementation” and “better institutional support.”<sup>66</sup> Taking this advice into consideration along with the geopolitical climate and resource constraints, three recommendations to improve R2P implementation have been proposed. Additionally, these proposed solutions are offered in sequential order as it is believed that synergies can be achieved if recommendations are phased in a certain manner.

### **Recommendation 1 – Removal of Hard, Coercive Initiatives**

The first recommendation is that humanitarian intervention, which involves use of military force to stop R2P violations, should be removed from the complement of strategies under the R2P doctrine. In other words, the third pillar would remain as identified, but the coercive “tools” under Chapter VII (using force) would be removed as a potential course of action.<sup>67</sup> This solution has been supported by some, based on the rationale that it “offers the best prospect for the future,” but has not gained widespread support.<sup>68</sup> If implemented, the existing strategies aimed primarily at “upstream” prevention could be employed with minimal resistance.<sup>69</sup> Thus, removal of military intervention as a R2P tool will assist in “norm internalization,” which is required to garner much needed support for non-coercive measures by mostly non-western states.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Phil Orchard. “Review Article: The evolution of the responsibility to protect: at a crossroads?” *International Affairs* 88:2(2012), 385.

<sup>67</sup> United Nations. “Implementing the Responsibility to Protect,” 9.

<sup>68</sup> Justin Morris. “Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum,” 1282.

<sup>69</sup> Phil Orchard. “Review Article: The evolution of the responsibility to protect: at a crossroads?” 379.

<sup>70</sup> Charles Ziegler. “Contesting the Responsibility to Protect,” 92.

## **Recommendation 2 – Security Council Improvement**

Many well-known experts have recommended that the UNSC requires radical reform and that it is “imperative” to R2P.<sup>71</sup> Conversely, others have labelled solutions aimed at reform as “misguided,” as suggested changes cannot possibly guarantee positive outcomes and may segregate a large portion of the international community.<sup>72</sup>

Considering there is a lack of political resolve and support for change, the feasibility of significantly changing the structure of the UNSC is low.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, it is prudent to focus efforts to improve the existing UNSC by enhancing support to the UN Secretariat and maximizing the usage of existing accountability measures.

Currently, the UN Secretariat is under-resourced and thus cannot provide the UNSC with robust, evidence-based briefings on suspected violations of R2P crimes on a regular basis.<sup>74</sup> If this capacity is enhanced, the additional evidence will amplify the political pressure applied to UNSC members to act. Additionally, the UNSC should be encouraged to leverage many of the accountability measures in place, which permits inclusion of specific limitations, clauses and reporting requirements within resolutions.<sup>75</sup> For example, application of a sunset clause into a resolution can solicit support from ambivalent states as it would attach a time limit to the resolution and mandate UNSC approval for any desired extensions.<sup>76</sup> In combination with the first recommendation,

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<sup>71</sup> Vitor Fernandes. “Past, Present and Future of the Responsibility to Protect: A Bumpy Journey.”

<sup>72</sup> Kirsten Ainley. “The Responsibility to Protect and the International Criminal Court: Counteracting the Crisis,” 43.

<sup>73</sup> United Nations. “2005 World Summit Outcome Document Resolution,” the feasibility of this proposal was made abundantly clear following the World Summit in 2005, when the UN membership decided to oppose the ICISS’ recommendation of instituting an alternative process for approving R2P-based resolutions; suggested structural changes include adding additional permanent members, removing the power of veto.

<sup>74</sup> Edward Luck. *The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect.*

<sup>75</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

these two proposed solution could result in tangible improvements without undermining the importance of the UNSC.

### **Recommendation 3 – Enhancement of UN Capabilities**

The first two recommendations are seen as key measures to enhance the international political support for R2P initiatives as many of the states that had resisted R2P would ideally begin to internalize the core values surrounding R2P. Moreover, as the importance of protecting civilians within their own states, their respective regions and globally is engrained as a norm, the reluctance to commit resources to R2P initiatives will decrease. That being said, it will remain difficult for the collective international community to invest resources where they have seemingly no national interest. This may certainly appear counterintuitive to good stewardship of a nation's resources and thus it is critical for the UN to have key integral resources to use where it is most required. Therefore, the third recommendation is for UN member states to collectively contribute to developing or enhancing three specific integral UN capabilities. Firstly, the UN would need to ensure that it has resident "focal points" within each state to conduct certain functions, including coordinating R2P activities within the state, conduct regular assessments and assist the state in integrating R2P into its national, regional and local policies.<sup>77</sup> Secondly, the UN needs to have the expertise within its organization that it can assign or deploy to states and regions as required in a "capacity-building" role.<sup>78</sup> This would include a number of subject matter experts, such as law enforcement specialists to enhance security throughout a state. Finally, the prevention strategy would require a significant amount of research, outreach and education, which requires the establishment

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<sup>77</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*, 15.

<sup>78</sup> Edward Luck. *The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect*, 6.

of a global institute on human rights and R2P issues.<sup>79</sup> This facility can be used to train high level officials throughout the world, conduct research to understand root causes of human insecurity and ensure all prevention programs are culturally-aligned. Clearly, developing these capabilities is a substantial undertaking, but if the political will exist among UN member states, then it is possible; particularly considering the cost-savings these preventative activities will create downstream.

## **CONCLUSION**

Amidst the human suffering witnessed by the world after the end of the Cold War, the international community became unified under the leadership of the UN to eliminate human insecurity with particular focus on four crimes: genocide, ethnic cleaning, crimes against humanity and war crimes. This noble endeavour by many influential leaders led to the creation of the R2P doctrine, which has been instrumental in shifting the narrative on the shared responsibilities of the international community, regional arrangements and individual states to protect civilian populations. Despite widespread consensus on its general concept, the R2P doctrine has been the target of widespread criticism and has, in many cases, failed to live up to its potential. This paper has outlined three key reasons for these shortcomings, including indecisiveness within the UNSC, ideological differences among UN member states and lack of political will and resources. Although these are significant obstacles, hope for improvements have been offered by delinking humanitarian intervention from R2P doctrine, ameliorating UNSC processes and developing critical UN capabilities focused on prevention. Unfortunately, the unpredictable and ever changing geopolitical climate may significantly impact the success achieved with any of these recommendations. That begin said, R2P cannot

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<sup>79</sup> Alex Bellamy. *The Responsibility to Protect: Towards a Living Reality*.



continue down its current path and solutions must be instituted to ensure that this critical agenda is preserved. In the end, global commitment to R2P is essential to advancing these profound principles with the ultimate goal to eliminate human suffering regardless of where it occurs throughout the world.

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