

Some Developing Country Statements on the Responsibility to Protect (Delivered during meetings on UN Reform held in 2005)

Cuban Statement

On the intended concepts of "responsibility to protect" and "human security", Cuba's position has not changed. In the present world's condition they would only facilitate interference, pressures and intervention in the internal affairs of our States by the big powers, in overt and constant threat to our peoples' right to self-determination.

Cuba reiterates its firm repudiation to the attempt of approval of these concepts, which only serve the interest of those who make millionaire profits with wars. Lately, there has been a trend to designate the so-called "failed states", whose political instability could put the security of the rich and powerful at risk, and which would have to be applied the naive recipe of "responsibility to protect" and respect for "human security". These so-called "failed states" appear on a list recently published by a well known magazine on international politics, where 60 of us, including some that will be surprised for being included in such an exclusive group, appear as threats according to 12 arbitrarily manipulated indicators. Those interested in the list may come to the Cuban seat.

Pakistan Statement

Responsibility to Protect

17. Many Member States continue to have serious concerns about endorsing the concept called 'responsibility to protect.' Of course, no one denies the need to protect civilians, especially in situations of armed conflict. The title of this section should clarify its scope by referring to Protection of Civilians. Second, responsibility for protecting civilians rests, first and foremost, with the individual States where they live. This should be emphasized further. Third, the paragraph should include affirmation of the principles of non-interference and non-intervention and full respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. It should also emphasize that humanitarian crises and conflicts can be prevented by promoting the right to development - food, shelter, fair terms of trade, debt relief, and adequate access to finance and technology and thus the necessity of helping States, which are under stress, at their request, before conflicts and crises break out.

Iran Statement

2. Undoubtedly, the international community cannot and should not sit idly and neglect its high responsibility when faced with heinous crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Indeed, it cannot be right for the United Nations to stand by, when the international community is faced with these crimes, and let them unfold to the end, with disastrous consequences for many thousands of innocent people. It is not, however, clear that introduction of a new concept rather than a more faithful implementation of the UN Charter, has the first order priority in the quest to meet such threats. The Report of the Secretary General has suggested the vague and highly controversial concept of "responsibility to protect" which is subject to a wide range of interpretations. The sensitivity of this issue has also been acknowledged by the Secretary General himself. The introduction of this concept, which has no basis in the Charter or in international law, may pave the ground for certain powers to pursue their political agenda under the pretext of humanitarian intervention and protection.

We believe that a delicate border should be drawn between the situations of acute crisis which needs immediate attention and response of the international community and the situations of less sensitive nature. Therefore, a case by case approach, on the basis of existing potentials of the Charter and without introduction of new concepts, may be the most productive and suitable solution. The general demand of respect for sovereignty should also be respected in this regard. We must demystify this concept and apply the same standards of modernization in its interpretation. In other words, sovereignty cannot be restricted, under the guise of conforming to the needs of 21st century, to allow intervention, while at the same time the same sovereignty is expanded to its 19th century parameters to relax the restrictions on the use of force.

India Statement

We have studied carefully the Secretary-General's views on the issue of "responsibility to protect". This is an issue of utmost importance and needs to be addressed with necessary caution and responsibility. We do not believe that discussions on the question should be used as a cover for conferring any legitimacy on the so-called 'right of humanitarian intervention' or making it the ideology of some kind of "military humanism". It is necessary to discuss this question and analyse all the ramifications of the idea of responsibility to protect, its limitations, its attendant obligations and the proposed mechanism for exercising it. As mentioned in the context of use of force, we believe that in case of genocide and gross human rights violations, no amount of sophistry can substitute for the lack of political will among the major powers.