



4 October 2010

Open Statement regarding UN report on the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect has noted with great concern and dismay the contents of the just released report, “Democratic Republic of the Congo: Mapping human rights violations 1993-2003.”

The report is a dramatic reminder of the gravity of the crimes committed by various states and non-state actors inside the Democratic Republic of the Congo over a long decade of instability and conflict. The evidence unearthed by the report points to the simultaneous perpetration of war crimes and crimes against humanity, two of the four crimes that the Responsibility to Protect seeks to banish forever. (Genocide may also have been committed, but the evidence is less clear.)

We condemn the gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law so thoroughly documented in this report. We also pay tribute to the determination of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in bringing to light more than 600 incidents of violence against civilians. The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect fully concurs with High Commissioner Navi Pillay that impunity must not prevail, in order to diminish the risk that such events recur.

The Global Centre, finally, expresses its grave disquiet that some of the actors involved in mass atrocities in the DRC continue to reiterate their support for the responsibility protect principle while behaving in a manner completely inconsistent with it. We thus take this tragic opportunity to remind the international community of states that their commitment to the responsibility to protect must be more than lip-service.

Monica Serrano
Executive Director
Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect