



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release 4 October 2011

Contact: Naomi Kikoler: 347-839-0663

CHINA/RUSSIA VETO A VICTORY FOR ‘IMPUNITY, INACTION AND INJUSTICE’

U.N Security Council Fails to Uphold its Responsibility to Protect in Syria

“Today’s veto is a new low. Action to stop Crimes Against Humanity should not be held prisoner to sectional political interests and convenient alliances. This veto will cost lives in Syria,” said Dr Simon Adams, Executive Director of the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

The use of the veto by China and Russia in the U.N. Security Council this evening represents a new low point in the Syrian crisis. While ordinary Syrians have endured months of being subjected to *Crimes Against Humanity*, the U.N Security Council has endlessly debated and redrafted a European-sponsored resolution on the crisis. Despite negotiations and concessions aimed at watering down criticisms and sanctions against the Syrian regime, China and Russia still exercised their veto when the resolution was put to a vote this evening.

The Russian and Chinese veto comes only a week after many world leaders, gathered at the UN General Assembly, strongly condemned the criminal violence perpetrated by the Syrian regime against its own people.

Ms Naomi Kikoler, Director of Policy and Advocacy at the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, commented that: *“Crimes Against Humanity have been committed. The Syrian regime should answer to the ICC and to the world for what it has done. Today’s veto will send a message that the Syrian government can continue to kill its own people without fear of consequence or sanction.”*

Roméo Dallaire, former Force Commander of the UN Mission to Rwanda and a Patron of the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, similarly commented that, *“The international community should never again cast itself as a passive spectator to mass murder. The current atrocities in Syria remind us that there is still much work to be done. Legitimate concerns about national sovereignty can not become an excuse for UN inaction. Syria might yet become a stain upon the conscience of the world, like Rwanda or Srebrenica. R2P is our antidote to complacency.”*

The use of the veto by China and Russia this evening will be met with criticism and disbelief around the world.

Dr Simon Adams said, *“In preventing the U.N. from upholding its Responsibility to Protect, China and Russia have placed themselves on the wrong side of history. Today’s veto is a victory for impunity, inaction and injustice. The long suffering people of Syria deserve better than this.”*

ENDS

The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect was created in February 2008 to catalyze action to move the 2005 World Summit agreement on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity from principle into practice. See website: www.globalr2p.org/ ###