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INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

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Rt Hon Philip Hammond, MP
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

15 September 2014

Dear Foreign Secretary,

This past year has witnessed numerous conflicts across the globe that have resulted in widespread human suffering and the perpetration of mass atrocities. In some of these situations the UN Security Council has acted effectively, but in other cases it has been blocked from upholding its responsibilities. At times the failure to prevent and protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity can stem from the paralyzing effect of the veto.

As a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council, the United Kingdom has professed commitment to preventing the commission of mass atrocity crimes. Your government has not used the veto since 1989. We urge you to strengthen this commitment by publicly declaring that the United Kingdom supports voluntary restraint on the use of the veto in mass atrocity situations. We believe the 70th anniversary of the UN next year is an important moment for the Permanent Members to work towards reaching an agreement on this crucial matter.

We also encourage you or a senior representative of the UK government to attend the 25 September Ministerial-level meeting on the veto, which is being co-hosted by the French and Mexican Foreign Ministers during the opening of the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly. We believe that signaling your support for this initiative will strengthen the resolve of all Permanent Members of the Council to prevent and respond to mass atrocity

situations. It will also send an important message to the broader UN membership about the United Kingdom's commitment to preventing and halting mass atrocity crimes.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Adams
Executive Director
Global Centre for R2P



Salil Shetty
Secretary-General
Amnesty International



Kenneth Roth
Executive Director
Human Rights Watch



Karim Lahidji
President
The International Federation
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James M Smith C.B.E.
Chief Executive Officer
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Natalie Samarasinghe
Executive Director
UNA-UK



Sapna Chhatpar Considine
Program Director
International Coalition for R2P

c.c. H.E. Sir Mark Lyall Grant, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations