

2019-2020 UN Security Council Elections and the Responsibility to Protect

Today, 8 June 2018, the United Nations General Assembly elected Belgium, Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa to the UN Security Council for 2019-2020. With their election, 9 of the 15 members of the Council in 2019 will be “Friends of the Responsibility to Protect” – having appointed an R2P Focal Point and/or joined the Group of Friends of R2P in New York and Geneva.

The global displacement of civilians due to conflict, mass atrocities and persecution is at its highest level since the end of the Second World War. As the UN body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council must ensure that populations in every country are protected from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Since 2005 the Security Council has adopted 70 resolutions and 21 Presidential Statements that refer to the Responsibility to Protect, including with regard to Central African Republic, South Sudan, Syria and eight other country situations. It is our hope that the Security Council will consistently uphold their commitment to R2P by taking early preventive action to avert emerging crises and halt atrocities wherever they are threatened.

To this end, the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect encourages all Security Council members to:

- Request briefings from the UN Secretary-General’s Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect, as well as relevant Special Rapporteurs, on situations where populations are at risk.
- Raise awareness and generate timely responses to crises, including through convening “Arria formula meetings” on country situations that are not on the Council’s formal agenda, regularly using “Any Other Business,” and coordinating Security Council visiting missions to countries or regions where mass atrocity risks are evident.
- Reaffirm the Security Council’s commitment to preventing mass atrocities by establishing a Security Council Working Group on R2P.
- Adhere to the ACT Code of Conduct by which Council members commit to take timely and decisive action to protect civilians and not vote against any credible resolution aimed at preventing mass atrocities.
- Support international justice mechanisms and ensure all perpetrators of mass atrocities are held to account, regardless of position or affiliation.
- Ratify or accede to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The Global Centre has compiled basic profiles on each of the newly-elected Security Council members. These provide an overview of their engagement with R2P, including whether they have appointed an R2P Focal Point, their respective contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, and their status with relevant international legal regimes, including the Genocide Convention and Arms Trade Treaty.

Belgium

Head of Government: Prime Minister Charles Michel

Minister for Foreign Affairs: H.E. Mr. Didier Reynders

Permanent Representative to the UN: H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve

Summary of R2P Engagement

Participation in UNGA R2P dialogue:	2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
R2P Group of Friends member:	Yes
Appointed R2P Focal Point:	Yes

Background

Regional Group:	Western European and Others Group (WEOG)
UN Security Council Membership:	1947-1948, 1955-1956, 1971-1972, 1991-1992, 2007-2008
Human Rights Council Membership:	2009-2012, 2016-2018
Contribution to UN Peacekeeping:	108 personnel (65 th largest contributor)
Signatory Kigali Principles on Protection of Civilians:	Yes
Signatory Safe Schools Declaration:	Yes
Signatory ACT Code of Conduct:	Yes
Signatory France/Mexico Veto Restraint Declaration:	Yes
Rome Statute of the ICC:	Ratified 28 June 2000
Genocide Convention:	Ratified 5 September 1951
Arms Trade Treaty:	Ratified 3 June 2014

Security Council Priorities:

- Defending human rights and protecting civilians
- Constructing sustainable peace and increasing the involvement of women in mediation
- Partnering for sustainable development and conflict prevention
- Fostering consensus, acting for peace
- Enhancing UN peacekeeping, with a focus on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts
- Fighting impunity, especially concerning the commission of mass atrocities
- Building consensus on and combating climate change
- Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect and accountability for atrocity crimes

On R2P: “Atrocity crime prevention can only be effective if we have appropriate structures in place and all the diplomatic, civilian and, as a last resort, military capabilities available to foster resilience, and ensure effective early warning and timely action. Therefore, it is absolutely crucial to continuously develop our institutional preparedness at national, regional and global level, particularly at the crucial stages of early prevention, and early reaction to warning signs. I’m convinced that by increasing member states’ accountability for institutionalizing R2P at each level, we can close the gap between principle and practice.” (UN General Assembly Informal Interactive Dialogue on R2P, 2017)

Dominican Republic

Head of State: President Danilo Medina Sánchez

Minister for Foreign Affairs: H.E. Mr. Miguel Vargas Maldonado

Permanent Representative to the UN: H.E. Mr. Francisco Antonio Cortorreal

Summary of R2P Engagement

Participation in UNGA R2P dialogue:	No
R2P Group of Friends member:	No
Appointed R2P Focal Point:	No

Background

Regional Group:	Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)
UN Security Council Membership:	Never served
Human Rights Council Membership:	Never served
Contribution to UN Peacekeeping:	5 personnel (108 th largest contributor)
Signatory Kigali Principles on Protection of Civilians:	No
Signatory Safe Schools Declaration:	Yes
Signatory ACT Code of Conduct:	Yes
Signatory France/Mexico Veto Restraint Declaration:	No
Rome Statute of the ICC:	Ratified 12 May 2005
Genocide Convention:	Signed 11 December 1948, but not ratified
Arms Trade Treaty:	Ratified 7 August 2014

Security Council Priorities:

- Tackling climate change with concrete action plans and maximum responsibility
- Promoting issues pertaining to the protection of civilians, with particular focus on the role of women in peace and security and the protection of children during armed conflicts
- Elevating the role of youth in conflict prevention and resolution
- Fighting global hunger and advancing sustainable development

On R2P: *The Dominican Republic has not formally commented on the Responsibility to Protect.*

Germany

Head of Government: Chancellor Angela Merkel

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs: H.E. Mr. Heiko Maas

Permanent Representative to the UN: H.E. Mr. Christoph Heusgen

Summary of R2P Engagement	
Participation in UNGA R2P dialogue:	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
R2P Group of Friends member:	Yes
Appointed R2P Focal Point:	Yes
Background	
Regional Group:	Western European and Others Group (WEOG)
UN Security Council Membership:	1977-1978, 1987-1988, 1995-1996, 2003-2004, 2011-2012
Human Rights Council Membership:	2006-2009, 2013-2015, 2016-2018
Contribution to UN Peacekeeping:	869 personnel (28 th largest contributor)
Signatory Kigali Principles on Protection of Civilians:	Yes
Signatory Safe Schools Declaration:	Yes
Signatory ACT Code of Conduct:	Yes
Signatory France/Mexico Veto Restraint Declaration:	Yes
Rome Statute of the ICC:	Ratified 11 December 2000
Genocide Convention:	Acceded 24 November 1954
Arms Trade Treaty:	Ratified 2 April 2014

Security Council Priorities:

- Addressing security challenges
- Developing sustainable climate policies
- Providing equal and high quality education for all young people
- Creating strong partnerships in development policy
- Advancing issues of sustainable peace and conflict prevention

On R2P: “The fact that genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing not only persist but are actually on the rise, constitutes a stark reminder of the urgent need to find solutions to prevent these crimes and thereby implement the responsibility to protect. [...] Germany very much welcomes the initiative to include the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect in the formal agenda of the General Assembly.” (UN General Assembly Informal Interactive Dialogue on R2P, 2017)

Indonesia

Head of State: President Joko Widodo

Minister for Foreign Affairs: H.E. Mrs. Retno Lestari Priansari Marsudi

Permanent Representative to the UN: H.E. Mr. Dian Triansyah Djani

Summary of R2P Engagement

Participation in UNGA R2P dialogue:	2009, 2013, 2014, 2015
R2P Group of Friends member:	No
Appointed R2P Focal Point:	No

Background

Regional Group:	Asia-Pacific Group
UN Security Council Membership:	1973-1974, 1995-1996, 2007-2008
Human Rights Council Membership:	2006-2007, 2007-2010, 2011-2014, 2015-2017
Contribution to UN Peacekeeping:	2,694 personnel (8 th largest contributor)
Signatory Kigali Principles on Protection of Civilians:	No
Signatory Safe Schools Declaration:	No
Signatory ACT Code of Conduct:	Yes
Signatory France/Mexico Veto Restraint Declaration:	Yes
Rome Statute of the ICC:	Non-signatory
Genocide Convention:	Non-signatory
Arms Trade Treaty:	Non-signatory

Security Council Priorities:

- Seeking commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation
- Supporting counter-terrorism efforts and combating transnational organized crime
- Facilitating conflict resolution and management and enhancing peacebuilding efforts
- Being a regional leader in the maintenance of peace and security
- Promoting UN Security Council reform to enhance credibility and responsiveness
- Pursuing gender equality and women empowerment
- Implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development
- Addressing climate change

On R2P: “I wish to point out the critical role of the UN Security Council in preventing the occurrence of atrocities, and in resolving conflicts. Indonesia is very much in line with the assertion of the Secretary-General in this year’s Report, that the growing international acceptance of the responsibility to protect should provide more solid basis for the Council to take action in the face of various atrocities.” (UN General Assembly Informal Interactive Dialogue on R2P, 2015)

South Africa

Head of State: President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa

Minister for International Relations and Cooperation: H.E. Ms. Lindiwe Nonceba Sisulu

Permanent Representative to the UN: H.E. Mr. Jerry Matthews Matjila

Summary of R2P Engagement	
Participation in UNGA R2P dialogue:	2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017
R2P Group of Friends member:	No
Appointed R2P Focal Point:	Yes
Background	
Regional Group:	African Group
UN Security Council Membership:	2007-2008, 2011-2012
Human Rights Council Membership:	2006-2007, 2007-2010, 2014-2016, 2017-2019
Contribution to UN Peacekeeping:	1,231 personnel (17 th largest contributor)
Signatory Kigali Principles on Protection of Civilians:	No
Signatory Safe Schools Declaration:	Yes
Signatory ACT Code of Conduct:	No
Signatory France/Mexico Veto Restraint Declaration:	No
Rome Statute of the ICC:	Ratified 27 November 2000
Genocide Convention:	Acceded 10 December 1998
Arms Trade Treaty:	Ratified 22 December 2014

Security Council Priorities:

- Pursuing UN Security Council reform and greater multilateralism and global governance
- Tackling the global North and South divide
- Prioritizing diplomacy and mediation through inclusive dialogue
- Addressing challenges to economic growth and stability, including corruption, tax evasion and money laundering
- Enhancing partnerships between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations
- Highlighting issues of peace and security
- Confronting the issues of food insecurity, refugees and migration and climate change

On R2P: “My delegation therefore fully agrees with the Secretary-General’s stance that increasing accountability in the international system and within the UN Secretariat is one practical step towards addressing the gap between commitment to an implementation of the political norm of Responsibility to Protect.” (UN General Assembly Informal Interactive Dialogue on R2P, 2017)