

UN Human Rights Council adopts first thematic resolution on the Responsibility to Protect

Today, 17 July, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted a resolution on the “Fifteenth anniversary of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as enshrined in the World Summit Outcome of 2005.” The resolution was adopted by a vote of 32 in favor, 1 against and 14 abstentions.

While the HRC has, to date, adopted more than 50 resolutions which include a reference to R2P, this constitutes the first stand-alone thematic resolution entirely on the principle of the Responsibility to Protect. On the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary since R2P was adopted at the UN World Summit, the resolution underlined the enduring historical importance of the commitment made by all heads of state and government in 2005.

Ms. Savita Pawnday, Deputy Executive Director of the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, said that, “The Human Rights Council and its procedures and mechanisms form a crucial part of the global early warning system for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. There are millions of vulnerable people around the world who look to the HRC, and to the broader Geneva-based human rights system, to speak up for them, to investigate wrongdoing, to identify threats to human dignity, and to help build resilient societies that protect universal human rights. We thank all those who co-sponsored the resolution today, and those who voted to affirm the enduring importance of timely preventive action guided by the principle of R2P.”

The Global Centre would especially like to thank the delegations of Costa Rica, Liechtenstein, Morocco, Peru, Qatar and Switzerland for their exemplary leadership on this resolution and for their commitment to advancing R2P.