

The African Union and the Challenges of Implementing the Responsibility to Protect

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Abstract:

The concept of the **responsibility to protect (2P)** was endorsed by the worlds leaders sitting at the 2005 World Summit level in the UN General Assembly. The World Summit Outcome Document affirmed that every sovereign government has a responsibility to protect its citizens and those within its jurisdiction from genocide, war crimes, thnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

The concept of **R2P** is cast in the three core pillars: first, an affirmation of the primary and continuing obligation of individual states to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, as well as incitement thereof; second, a commitment by the international community to assist states in meeting these obligations; and third, acceptance by UN member states of their responsibility to respond in a timely and decisive manner through the UN Security Council, if national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from these mass atrocity crimes.

R2P is a restatement of positive binding obligations of states to protect their citizens from mass atrocity crimes; and the collective responsibility to the international community to prevent mass atrocity crimes. These obligations are particularly relevant to Africa in the face of crises such as those in Sudan (Darfur), parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Somalia. It is, however, rather early to pass definitive judgment on the relatively young notion of R2P without addressing some of the challenges confronting its implementation in Africa.

Read the [report](#) .