

With contributions from many of the world's most respected R2P experts and practitioners, this compendium of pieces from e-IR attempts to draw attention to the major points of contention that have been highlighted by the Libyan intervention.

The international community has a contentious history when it comes to preventing and halting mass atrocities. Throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries, states largely failed to act according to their responsibilities as signatories of the 1948 Genocide Convention, 'standing by' time after time while civilians were targeted by their leaders, despite their declarations that such crimes must "never again" be allowed to happen. It was only in 2001, under the shadow of shameful inaction during the Rwandan genocide and in light of the perceived success of the 1999 Kosovo intervention, that the international community was finally able to produce a comprehensive framework of policy tools designed to guide states towards preventing mass atrocities. The Responsibility to Protect (often referred to as R2P or RtoP) aimed to halt atrocities as they occurred, and rebuild and reconstruct societies in the wake of such crimes. It represented the policy realization of the statement "never again". Now a growing international relations, human rights and international security norm, R2P cuts to the core of what it means to be a moral player in the international arena.

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