

### Europe

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A number of historical circumstances pertaining to human rights violations throughout Europe's history - namely the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, genocide in Bosnia and crimes against humanity in Kosovo - explain Europe's present-day commitment to halting and preventing atrocity.

At the UN, most European governments are strong supporters of the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP), and many had a significant role in achieving the adoption of the Responsibility to Protect at the 2005 World Summit. Since 2005, governments have expressed their support in various fora, such as the [Security Council debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict](#) and the Opening Sessions of the General Assembly. In these statements they have also called for RtoP to be operationalized at the UN and implemented in crises such as Darfur and Burma.

Please see our

[government statements](#)

page to view European statements on RtoP.

### I. The European Union

The EU has the capacity to help make RtoP a reality. The regional organization employs significant soft power through development assistance and a direct diplomacy in conflict prevention and resolution, and possesses the ability to deploy coercive power through sanctions and military intervention when necessary. While the EU does have the capacity to enforce such measures as sanctions and penalties, it has however been difficult to find consensus and willingness to do so. This is exemplified by the number of statements of concern that were expressed about the crisis in Darfur, without substantive measures being acted upon from the body.

#### 1. RtoP at the EU Since the 2005 World Summit

EU members have expressed their endorsement and support of the RtoP through the following instruments: **a. *The European Consensus on Development (December 2005)*** The EU, as the biggest provider of development aid, signed the

[European Consensus on Development](#)

on 20 December 2005, through which was expressed the willingness to 'make a decisive contribution to the eradication of poverty and to help build a more peaceful and equitable world'. In this policy statement, EU Member States, the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission agreed to a common EU vision of development, reaffirming their support to the RtoP:

"The EU also strongly supports the responsibility to protect. We cannot stand by, as genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing or other gross violations of international humanitarian law and human rights are committed. The EU will support a strengthened role for the regional and sub-regional organizations in the process of enhancing international peace and security, including their capacity to coordinate donor support in the area of conflict prevention." (Article 37 of the Consensus)

### ***b. European Security Strategy (2008)***

The European Security Strategy, '[A Secure Europe In A Better World](#)'

(12 December 2003) identifies the key threats facing the Union and defines its strategic objectives. An update to this document was issued on 11 December 2008 with additional threats and objectives to Europe's security agenda. This document on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy, "

[Providing Security In A Changing World](#)

", refers directly to the necessity for all states to "take responsibility for the consequences of their actions and hold a shared responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" (page 2). The document also identifies advancing the 2005 RtoP agreement as an important priority for the EU.

### ***c. EU Parliamentary Resolutions Reference RtoP in the Darfur Crisis (2006-2011)***

Since the 2005 world summit, the EU Parliament has passed a number of resolutions referring to the Responsibility to Protect, denouncing atrocities and asking for protection of civilians in conflict zones:

1. On 6 April 2006, the EU Parliament referred to RtoP for the first time in a

[Resolution on the situation in Sudan](#)

which called for UN action to protect civilians, recalling the international community 2005 commitment to RtoP.

2. On 28 September 2006, the EU parliament [urged](#) the Government of Sudan to accept a United Nations peacekeeping force in Darfur, underlining that "Sudan has failed in its 'responsibility to protect' its own people and is therefore obliged to accept a UN force in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1706.

3. On 15 February 2007, an [EU Parliament resolution](#) referred to the Responsibility to Protect and called for the deployment of UN-supported peacekeeping force in Darfur even in the absence of consent from the Sudanese government in order to secure humanitarian aid corridors and protect the population.

4. On 12 July 2007, the Parliament

[directly called](#)

on the UN to act in line with its 'Responsibility to Protect', demanding that Members States, the

EU Council and the Commission provide effective protection to the people of Darfur. The Resolution also welcoming the AU/UN Hybrid Force and urged for an international force in Chad.

5. On 22 May 2008, the EU Parliament referred to the Responsibility to Protect norm and strongly condemned Sudan's failure to cooperate with the ICC. The [resolution](#) called on the European Council and the UN Security Council to take steps towards adopting targeted sanctions against Sudanese officials responsible and to end impunity.

6. On 12 March 2009, the Parliament referred to the "Responsibility to Protect" in the [resolution](#) on the expulsion of NGOs from Darfur. For more information on the situations and the role of the international community, please visit our page on the [crisis in Darfur](#) and the [Darfur timeline](#)

7. On 10 March 2011, the Parliament referred to the "Responsibility to Protect" in the [resolution](#) on the Southern Neighborhood, particularly Libya.

#### ***d. EU Parliamentary Resolutions Reference RtoP in the Libya Crisis (2011)***

1. The European Union adopted a [decision](#) on February 26, 2011 to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1970 by imposing a travel ban and freezing the financial assets of government members.

2. On 10 March, the [European Parliament](#) adopted a Resolution recognizing the Interim National Council as officially representing the Libyan opposition. The resolution stressed that "the EU and its Member States must honor their **Responsibility to Protect**, in order to save Libyan civilians from large-scale armed attacks; points out that no option provided for in the UN Charter can therefore be ruled out; calls on the High Representative and the Member States to stand ready for a UNSC decision on further measures, including the possibility of a no-fly zone aimed at preventing the regime from targeting the civilian population." The Resolution asks to make financial and human resources available to support a robust international humanitarian operation, assisting humanitarian agencies in protecting and assisting population. It also declared that "mercenary activities are a threat to international peace and security and a crime against humanity and must therefore be stopped".

3. On 10 June 2011, in a [document](#) on the priorities of the EU for the 66

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Session of the General Assembly, the Council of Europe welcomed the adoption of UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, as well as the reference to the Responsibility to Protect in both resolutions.

## 2. EU-AU Strategic Partnership

Since 2003, the EU has deployed missions and cooperated with regional bodies to support national governments and other regional organizations to respond to conflict more effectively. With this aim in mind, EU-AU partnerships were launched in Lisbon in December 2007, agreed to by EU and African Heads of State through the

[EU-Africa Joint Strategy](#)

. The Strategy stipulates coordination and assistance with the AU on various issues including human rights and peace and security. The Strategy aims at enhancing the capacity of the AU and of other regional mechanisms in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, as well as post-conflict reconstruction. Two Action Plans have been adopted since the implementation of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy, the

[First Action Plan](#)

from 2008-2010 and a

[Second Action Plan](#)

for 2011-2013. The Action Plans, which build on the political objectives of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy, focus on eight areas for strategic partnership, including peace and security, and democratic governance and human rights.

### 3. The EU and the Use of Force

The EU has deployed military force, such as in Macedonia in 2003, Bosnia in 2004, Eastern Congo in 2003/2006, and Chad and Central African Republic in 2008. Challenges to these missions include difficulties in obtaining human resources and logistics on the ground, as seen during the involvement of EUFOR in Chad. There remains much to accomplish in garnering political will to intervene, as well as developing capacity to protect civilians from atrocity crimes.

## 4. EU Situation Room

The EU Situation Room

[became operational](#)

on 15 July 2011 and is part of the European External Action Service Crisis Response Department (EEAS). Its tasks will include: providing monitoring of the global political climate and current situation and crisis awareness, and acting as an informative service for EU Delegations. The Situation Room will also seek to manage and develop relations with similar crisis mechanisms in certain International Organizations and national governments.

## II. Other Regional Bodies

Many European nations are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which has shown capacity to intervene to halt mass atrocities, as in Operation Allied Force in Kosovo

from March to June 1999, and Operation Unified Protector in Libya which began on 27 March 2011. Other missions that took place with UN Security Council authorization included the Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia from 1995 to 2004, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) from June 1999, and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan since 2001. Since 2006, NATO has a fully operational force called the NATO Response Force (NRF) consisting of 25,000 troops available for rapid deployment as a collective defense, crisis management, or stabilization force.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest regional security organization and the most inclusive. It plays an essential non-military role in promoting peace and stability and advancing democracy and human rights in Europe. The OSCE offers a forum for political negotiations and decision-making in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. It has a Conflict Prevention Center which maintains an early-warning situation room and implements confidence-building measures. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) focuses on issues around elections, democratization, nondiscrimination, and the protection of minorities.

**III. RtoP at the National Level** European States have begun to embrace the Responsibility to Protect at the national level through the implementation of measures within domestic and foreign policies. Presently France, Germany, Norway, Denmark and the United Kingdom have **codified the Responsibility to Protect and/or have been vocal in their support of RtoP at the national level**

. The progress made within these states sets an example for countries who have not yet taken action to embrace RtoP at the national level.

These European nations have reaffirmed their commitment to the Responsibility to Protect through international participation in dialogue on RtoP and by publishing the following government documents:

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### **Germany**

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[White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr](#) (2006). This military strategy document discusses the impact of RtoP “on the ways of thinking in Western countries” as well as confirms German support for the use of non-coercive measures including “diplomatic, economic, development policy and policing measures.”

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### **France**

:

[The White Paper on Defense and National Security; France and Europe in World Politics](#) (2008). The White Papers reaffirm French support for RtoP and urges the European Union to

follow the actions of France to embrace the principle. The *White Paper on Defense and National Security* integrates RtoP within the government's principal guidelines for foreign policy through the President's office.

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### **The United Kingdom**

:

[\*National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom\*](#)

(2008). This security strategy document confirms the support of RtoP by the British government stating that "the international 'Responsibility to Protect' ultimately requires the international community to act" to protect populations from mass atrocities.

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### **Norway**

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[\*Report No. 40 Norway's Humanitarian Policy\*](#)

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[\*Report No. 13 Climate, Conflict and Capital: Norwegian Development Policy Adapting to Change\*](#)

(2009).

*Report No. 13*

briefly focuses on the Responsibility to Protect in its discussion on Norway's strategy for security and post-conflict development.

*Report No. 40*

provides a more detailed examination of RtoP in section 4.4 of the document entitled "Responsibility to Protect". This section focuses on RtoP and the issue of the principle's application and implementation.

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### **Denmark**

:

[\*Ministerial Meeting: The Responsibility to Protect\*](#)

(September 2010);

[\*First Meeting of National Focal Points on RtoP\*](#)

(May 2011). In September 2010, the Foreign Minister of Denmark co-hosted a Ministerial Conference with the Foreign Minister of Ghana entitled "The Responsibility to Protect." In addition to participating in this dialogue on implementing RtoP at the national level, the Danish government has appointed a national focal point for the Responsibility to Protect, and co-hosted the first meeting of National Focal Points on RtoP held on 17-18 May 2011.

## **IV. The Future of RtoP within the EU**

The EU is the world's largest provider of international assistance and an important foreign and security policy actor. As such, it has a great role to play in responding more effectively to protect civilians from mass atrocities and in assisting other states and institutions to develop the capacity to do so. Civil society has an important role to play in advancing the RtoP at the EU, for instance by pushing for discussions and debates of RtoP within the Commission and Parliament, for more effective responses to RtoP situations when they arise, and for states to express support for the norm in their statements and in domestic legislation.

For a detailed civil society analysis on the challenges and recommendations for the EU to advance RtoP, see [Oxfam's 2008 EU policy paper](#).

**V. Civil Society Reports and Events** Civil society and non-governmental organizations have a very important role to play in the implementation of RtoP. Below please find reports and statements by civil society, and information on forums, roundtables, and conferences held on RtoP, prevention, and operationalizing civilian components in regional bodies.

- Daniel Fiott, a research fellow at **Madriaga – College of Europe Foundation**, delivered a presentation on 13 June 2012 entitled

[\*\*\*The EU and Civilian Protection: The Obstacles Hampering Unified Civil-Military Action\*\*\*](#)

at an event organized by Global Action to Prevent War, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the World Federation of United Nations Associations and ICRtoP. He discussed the **use of force in humanitarian crises and the protection of civilians** and the **difficulties that the European Union faces in deploying forces under its Battlegroup structures**

- **The Union of European Federalists (UEF)** adopted a resolution on 13 November 2011, [\*\*\*“UEF Support to the Responsibility to Protect Principle,”\*\*\*](#) admiring the principles of the Responsibility to Protect and calling on the **European Union to more effectively implement the preventive elements of the norm**. The UEF stated that the UN should operate under the RtoP framework when dealing with situations of mass atrocities and that the UN should make a conscious effort to raise resources for pillar three measures rather than relying on countries willing to intervene.

- **The Madariaga – College of Europe Foundation (MCF)** and the **Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA)** organized a workshop entitled [\*\*\*“Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities”\*\*\*](#)

on 12-13 May, 2011. Participants, who included representatives of international organizations, European institutions, NGOs and experts in the field, focused on **sharing their experiences, lessons learned, and best practices** on how to **narrow the gap between early warning and timely action** for the prevention of mass atrocities.

- **The Stanley Foundation**

convened a conference on 11 May 2011 which focused on the theme,

**[The Role of Regional and Sub-Regional Arrangements in Strengthening the Responsibility to Protect](#)**

. The conference report published on 25 May 2011 included a paper by Andrea Bartoli entitled ***The Role of European Arrangements in Strengthening the Responsibility to Protect***

. This paper discusses current debates on the norm and examines the role of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to identify the impact of the European experience on the Responsibility to Protect.

- **The International Peace Institute**

published a

**[meeting note](#)**

on 4 May 2011 to summarize the details of a workshop held on 3 April 2011 entitled

**[From Confidence Tricks to Confidence Building: Resolving Conflict in the OSCE Area](#)**

. The workshop focused on the

**use of confidence building mechanisms as a tool for reducing conflict**

in the OSCE region, with participants discussing both

**top-down and bottom-up approaches to increase confidence**

between parties.

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On 28 February 2011 the European think tank,

**FRIDE**

, released a paper by Lucia Montanaro and Julia Schünemann entitled

**[Walk the Talk: The EU Needs an Effective Early Warning System to Prevent Conflict and Promote Peace](#)**

. The paper highlights

**key constraints in the EU's conflict prevention and response systems**

and provides

**recommendations**

to overcome them.

- **The Foundation for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities**

was registered in Budapest on 14 January 2011, and is expected to start its operations by early



2012. The Foundation, through a Centre that will act as its operative body, will concentrate on **bridging the gap between early warning and early action**, set up and apply an integrated **warning-response support system** and **generate political consensus for early action** at the international and regional level.

- **United Nations University-Comparative Regional Integration Studies**

published a paper in January 2011 written by Andrej Kirn entitled

[\*\*\*The European Union's Role in Promoting and Implementing the Responsibility to Protect in Africa: Turning Political Commitments into Effective Action\*\*\*](#)

. The paper examines the

**promotion of RtoP at the EU and international levels**

and analyzes the extent to which the

**EU has channeled its support for the norm into action in Africa.**

- **Wilton Park**

held a conference from 26-28 July 2010 entitled

[\*\*\*How can the Lisbon Treaty Help the European Union Mainstream the Responsibility to Protect?\*\*\*](#)

The conference focused on

**what measures need to be implemented**

to enable the EU to use its instruments and resources to mainstream RtoP, specifically in regards to

**the prevention of mass atrocities**

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The

**Réseau Multidisciplinaire d'Etudes Stratégiques**

(RMES) included in its Fall 2009 publication

***Les Cahiers du RMES***

, an article by Galia Glume and Quentin Martens

**discussing RtoP and the extent to which the EU has implemented the norm**

,[\*\*\*La Responsabilité de Protéger: Où en est l'Union Européenne?\*\*\*](#)

According to the authors,

**the European Union, though supportive of RtoP, has yet to define the concept or**

**mainstream RtoP in EU activities**

. The authors conclude with several

**recommendations**

for the EU and call on Member States and EU organs to continue debating the norm, with input

from civil society, to define the principles and apply them to EU law.

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Every two years, the

**European Commission**

brings together in Brussels the international community of policy makers and practitioners in conflict prevention and crisis response so as to examine and learn from responses to crises and security threats. From 3-4 June 2009 the conference, entitled

[\*\*\*Making a Difference: Strengthening Capacities to Respond to Crises and Security Threats\*\*\*](#)

, focused on

**identifying effective approaches to the strengthening of crisis response capacities**

. A panel was designated to specifically focus on what the

**key priorities of the EU**

should be towards

**contributing to RtoP.**

• **Initiative for Peacebuilding**

published a synthesis report in April 2009 entitled

[\*\*\*Responding to People's Security Needs: Improving the Impact of European Union Programming\*\*\*](#)

. The paper

**targets EU and Member State policy makers**

and is designed to

**improve security related programming**

by identifying current challenges and recommending strategies to overcome them.

• **The EU Institute for Security Studies**

organized a

**Panel Discussion**

held on 24 November 2008 entitled

[\*\*\*R2P: How to Make the International System More Responsive\*\*\*](#)

. The Panel addressed concerns and questions relating to the content and implementation of the norm.

• **ISIS Europe**

, in the No. 39 July 2008 issue of the

***European Security Review***

, published the article

[\*\*\*The Responsibility-to-Protect: Sovereignty, Political Will and Capabilities\*\*\*](#)

by Daniel Fiott. The article

**discusses the norm and its implications on the concept of sovereignty**

, and examines the  
**political will**  
and  
**military preparedness**  
**of the EU**  
for the implementation of RtoP.

- **R2P Engaging Civil Society**

held a conference from 25-26 June 2008 entitled  
[\*Dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect: European Perspectives\*](#)  
. The theme of the first day of the conference centered on  
**enhancing dialogue on the norm**  
while day two focused on  
**strengthening the capacity and activity of civil society**  
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- **Oxfam International**

released a report in March 2008 entitled  
[\*The Responsibility to Protect and the European Union\*](#)  
which discussed the  
**achievements of the EU to support the norm**  
, identified the  
**challenges that still exist**  
, and highlighted  
**future opportunities and recommendations**  
for improvement.