

Paul LaRose-Edwards, of CANADEM, began by suggesting that in the interest of building on the discussion on the "The Responsibility to Protect", participants assume that there is a responsibility to protect, and focus on exploring concrete ways in which Canada can implement or operationalize the responsibility.

Andrew Mack, of the University of British Columbia's Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues, a former director for strategic planning to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, began by recalling how, in 1999, the Secretary General electrified and angered much of the UN General Assembly by highlighting the inconsistencies in international response to humanitarian emergencies and articulating a powerful moral imperative to "do something." At the same time, a cynicism born of a long history of imperialism cloaked in humanitarian rhetoric pushed many states to see intervention as an unacceptable assault on sovereignty. "The Responsibility to Protect" reframed the debate so as to demonstrate that sovereignty as a principle of non-intervention has never been the central issue. In cases of intervention in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti and East Timor, the problem was not one of sovereignty, but of a reluctance of Northern states to "pay the price" of intervention for the protection of human rights. Mack pointed out that while many observers have explained this as a "lack of political will," the phrase is analytically useless, and does not lend itself to a solution. What is needed instead is a way to persuade key players in the North that it is in their interest to react as early as possible. Noting that there are various ways to make this argument, he submitted that "The Responsibility To Protect" could play a key role as a vehicle for norm development.

Fergus Watt, of the World Federalists of Canada, observed that "The Responsibility to Protect" has tremendous potential to equip the multilateral system and the UN for the 21st century. He welcomed in particular the report's openness to the possibility of intervention not authorized by the Security Council should it fail to react appropriately, and suggested that the report may help to build a much needed system of norms and political accountability for such interventions. Watt's enthusiasm was qualified primarily by the report's lack of a clearly defined program of action, as he feared that it may be difficult to sell the report in political circles. Emphasizing that Canada could play an important role in this, he suggested that Canadian civil society push to explore the report's implications for the upcoming Canadian foreign and defence policy review process. He also proposed that it might be worth establishing an international ad hoc coalition or perhaps using the existing Human Security Network to engage other states. Finally, he hoped that Canada would lead by example, recommitting itself to the goal of achieving a robust rapid reaction capability or by further integrating Canadian management of peace support operations by improving interdepartmental cooperation, emergency assessment, training and deployment.

Lt. Col. Gaston Côté, of the Department of National Defence, underscored the point that further integration of peace operations is needed by observing that it is critical to resist at every opportunity the tendency to separate the military, political and economic aspects of international responses to conflict. In the same vein, he argued that it makes more sense to deploy military force at an early stage and as part of a strategy of prevention rather than reaction. As evidenced by the deployment of the Canadian Forces in Eastern Zaire during Operation Assurance in 1996, effective and credible diplomacy plays a key role in the prevention phase. Regarding reaction, Côté noted that effective international action demands a clear, robust and enforceable mandate, an effective authority structure and focus, and a strong partnership structure. He also observed