



The Royal Danish Embassy



Royal Danish Defence College

South Africa in Africa workshop and seminar series Co-hosted by SIGLA, the Danish Embassy in South Africa and RDDC

Thursday 7 November 2019

Time: 0900-1500

Venue:

The Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre

1 Duncombe Rd, Forest Town, Johannesburg, 2193, South Africa

Seminar:

Armed conflict in Africa and atrocity prevention

Since 2010, the number of armed conflicts has according to PRIO increased substantially from under 40 to around 50. Furthermore, the number of civilian casualties, both directly and indirectly caused by conflict, have increased as well. In Africa, the continued conflicts in countries and locations like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), Somalia, Libya, the Lake Chad Basin and Mali illustrate the urgency in finding effective tools to address the challenges and negative impact conflict has on human security and human lives in general. The growth in religious radicalism, armed non-state actors, and identity based "glocal" actors have further increased the risks and "costs" for local communities and civilians who are the victims in these conflicts. Atrocities, including war crimes and ethnic cleansing, form part of these contemporary conflicts, which call for international responses and tools to effectively deal with these crimes. South Africa is currently a member of the UN Security Council (UNSC), and therefore is in a unique position to influence and address the challenges faced by the international community from war and conflict. The UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No 16 focuses on creating peace, building strong institutions that can protect the citizens of a state as well as securing justice and fighting impunity for crimes committed. There is consequently an urgent need to strengthen the international atrocity prevention tools and their implementation and ensure that both governments and non-state actors are held accountable for their actions. The South African

government in the post-1994 era, has historically been supportive of the United Nations and the atrocity prevention and human rights agenda priority. South Africa played a central role in establishing institutions to assist in promoting the atrocity prevention agenda, which in 2005 led the UN General Assembly to unanimously pass the political commitment for member states to adhere to the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle. In the 2005 World Summit Document, it is stipulated that:

“Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will act following it. The international community should as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility and support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.”

It was furthermore stipulated that:

“The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity....”

Since the adoption of the R2P principle in 2005, the question of how to make atrocity prevention effective has become a frequent reference point at the United Nations. The UN Secretary-General has prioritized this issue since 2009 in annual reports on R2P and the UN General Assembly has every year made exchanges on atrocity prevention. Furthermore, both the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council have frequently referred to R2P in resolutions. At the same time, R2P has been contested and is by some seen to represent an extreme measure of intervention. There are, however, three legs of the R2P principles and this seminar will look at these in their entirety:

Pillar One: Every state has the Responsibility to Protect its populations from four mass atrocity crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Pillar Two: The wider international community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual states in meeting that responsibility.

Pillar Three: If a state is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take appropriate collective action, in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter.

Against this background, the seminar will address the following key questions:

- 1) What is the status of atrocity prevention at the United Nations?
- 2) What progress has been made on implementing atrocity prevention in practice? What challenges continue to exist?

- 3) What is the role and experience of the African Union and of sub-regional organisations in implementing atrocity prevention in practice?
- 4) What space is there for South Africa to impact the international discussion on atrocity prevention?
- 5) What role does atrocity prevention play for South African foreign policy?
- 6) What significance does atrocity prevention have for South Africa domestically?

The participants will be a mixture of academia, government officials, international organisations, representatives from embassies and civil society. The seminar brings together a key group of stakeholders that include relevant academics, practitioners and decision-makers for a day of open and free discussion under Chatham House rules.

For questions related to the seminar and for registration pls. contact: Prof. Thomas Mandrup, RDDC/SIGLA, thomasm@sun.ac.za, Cell: +27 (0)833370009

Limited seats available - RVSP by 31 October 2019

Program
 Thursday 7th November 2019
 Venue: The Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre
 1 Duncombe Rd, Forest Town,
 Johannesburg, 2193, South Africa

Time	Subject	Speaker
08.30-09.00	Arrival	
09.00-09.10	Welcome	Vice Dean, Prof. Michelle Nel, SU/SIGLA
09.10-09.20	Denmark and the debate on atrocity prevention	Amb. Tobias Elling Rehfeld
09.20-09.50	Setting the Scene: The Politics around atrocity prevention – trends in the UN system	Prof. Karen Smith, UNSG Special Adviser on R2P
09.50-10.20	Setting the Scene: The Implementation of R2P – tools and lessons of atrocity prevention	Prof. Martin Mennecke, University of Southern Denmark and Adviser to the MFA Denmark
10.20-11.00	Discussions	
11.00-11.20	Coffee/Tea	
11.20- 11.40	South African foreign policy on atrocity prevention post-Zuma.	Ms. Faith Mabera, Senior Researcher at the IGD
11.40-12.00	South Africa and questions of atrocity prevention – the position of South Africa on R2P.	Senior Advisor, Ms Thanisa Naidu-Lewin, and Ms Romi Brammer DIRCO, Legal Section,
12.00-12.40	Discussions	
12.40-13.30	Lunch	
13.30-13.50	The tools: What does atrocity prevention require from military perspective?	The SANDF TBC
13.50-14.10	The tools: The contemporary conflicts in Africa, and the African Union tool-box- ready for atrocity prevention in the future?	Prof. Thomas Mandrup, SIGLA and the RDDC
14.10-14.50	Discussions	
14.50-15.00	Wrap-up and goodbye	Prof. Francois Vreÿ, SIGLA-SU

