

## Illinois General Assembly adopts R2P Resolution

Adopts Historic Resolution in Support of the UN's "Responsibility to Protect" Doctrine

Chicago, IL (January 9, 2007) In an historical step to engage America on supporting the United Nations' efforts to end genocide and other atrocity crimes, the Illinois General Assembly has unanimously adopted a joint resolution supporting the revolutionary principle of the "Responsibility to Protect";

This principle — adopted by the United Nations Security Council and the other members of the United Nations — affirms that each individual country has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. If a country fails to do so, the international community has the responsibility to protect those populations from the most egregious behaviors wrecking humanity.

This action, believed to be the first such action by a State-level legislative branch in our nation, furthers Illinois' historical leadership role in the promotion of human rights by calling on the President and the U.S. Congress to work for the effective implementation of the September 16, 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome declaration on the "Responsibility to Protect"; The resolution builds on a similar step taken by the City Council of the City of Chicago on September 13, 2006.

"Illinois citizens also share in this Responsibility to Protect — and I am proud that through SJR0095 this action has been carried forward in the Illinois General Assembly. Genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity are our individual and our common responsibility, and the State of Illinois affirms that this moral imperative, as called for by the United Nations, must be fulfilled," said Illinois Senate President Emil Jones.

"Today, as the first General Assembly in the nation to adopt the Responsibility to Protect resolution, members of the Illinois House and Senate have taken the lead in recognizing this amazing doctrine and the prophecy it embodies. We hope that other General Assemblies across the nation will follow our steps," said Illinois House Speaker Michael J. Madigan.

"This is an historic piece of legislation — one that we hope will serve as a call to action by the public and our leadership. This legislation lets the world know — once and for all — that America is united in its resolve to end acts of genocide around the world," said House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie.

"The world must stand together on this issue for us to succeed. The Responsibility to Protect Resolution passed today is the first step in what will be a national effort to move the international community to prevent and act against genocide and other crimes against humanity. The vital work to end atrocity crimes is just beginning," said House Minority Leader Tom Cross.

Richard Cooper, convener of the R2P Coalition, a not-for-profit and nonpartisan grassroots organization headed by a group of internationally recognized leaders in human rights, was the proponent of the resolution. The goal of the R2P Coalition is to realize the promise of the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine. The Coalition is working with political, religious and academic leaders to engage America on this issue and ensure that our nation truly embraces and fully implements its domestic and international "Responsibility to Protect";

"I am delighted and proud that the State of Illinois has, once again, perpetuated its historic and noble reputation of taking national leadership on the promotion of human rights. The United Nations has given us a century-defining opportunity to end atrocity crimes, and Illinois' petition to our federal government calls upon our national leadership to make it happen. The Responsibility to Protect proclaims that we are all each others' keepers: this

principle calls upon us to do the right thing," said Mr. Cooper.

In the state's joint resolution (full text available at <http://R2Pcoalition.org>) the Illinois House and Senate resolved:

- That they strongly urge the President and Congress to commit the leadership of the United States government to effective implementation of the World Summit Outcome declaration on the responsibility to protect and to do so in part through strengthening of the preventive early warning capabilities of the federal government and to develop strategies and policies as outlined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (U.N. Document A/RES/60/1) and in the Security Council Resolution 1674 (2006) to ensure that the responsibility to protect populations has both credible meaning and effect, and that the United States is in the forefront of its domestic and global application;
- That the President should initiate discussions with the permanent and non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the members of the United Nations General Assembly and in separate forums with the governments of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, the African Union, the Organization of American States, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations respectively, to develop coordinated strategies for regional efforts to implement the responsibility to protect, and that Congress should express its full support for these discussions by joint resolution; and
- That copies of this resolution be sent to the President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the mayor or each city member of the United States Conference of Mayors, each member of the Illinois congressional delegation, the President and Vice President of the United States, the U.S. Secretary of State, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, and the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

The resolutions on the "Responsibility to Protect", received the generous support of Senate President Emil Jones and House Speaker Michael Madigan. Senator Jackie Collins sponsored the Senate Joint Resolution with the support of Senate Republican Leader Frank Watson. In the House, Representative Barbara Currie sponsored the resolution.

For more information on the principle of the "Responsibility to Protect" see: [www.R2Pcoalition.org](http://www.R2Pcoalition.org)