

Fellowship Summary: From Intent to Outcomes

At the World Summit in 2005, member countries of the United Nations (UN) unanimously endorsed the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P), a statement that makes it clear that the international community has a responsibility to intervene (through means of prevention, protection and rebuilding) when a state manifestly fails to protect its own population. The goal of my fellowship was to create dialogue and bring R2P to life through a civil, grassroots movement, using northern Uganda as a case study for the relevancy of this global policy. The idea was to play a leadership role in converting this vague UN initiative into practical actions that citizens and governments could take.

I set out in my original statement of intent to bring to light this, "...vital concept that has yet to be tested," with my ultimate aim being to find innovative ways to push R2P into the human rights dialogue.

What I discovered however, in the opening months of my fellowship, was that civil society was not ready for a 'movement' on R2P; education and awareness needed to happen first.

With that in mind, I reset the strategy of my fellowship around building key partnerships, building my personal knowledge base and fostering a global network that would allow me to deliver a future advocacy initiative that would bring R2P into the mainstream human rights dialogue. My fellowship work would lay the foundation.

Actions and Activities

As I embarked on my fellowship activities my goal was to get educated and to take this opportunity to question (i) where Canada now stood on R2P, (ii) the level of support in Canada in order to continue to lead R2P at the UN and (iii) was there grassroots support at the NGO and civil society level to create a push from the bottom up.

I have attached a full outline of all of the contacts, actions and activities I was a part of over the past 12 months and I was strategic about setting up meetings in Ottawa, New York and Washington, DC to provide the scope this work required. My one-on-one, face-to-face meetings opened with those involved in the development and original movement for R2P at the UN, including Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, former UN ambassadors Paul Heinbecker and Allan Rock, who continues to be an active advisor and has agreed to support the development of this overall initiative.

I then had one-on-one meetings with those currently engaged in the R2P struggle including Canadian Senator General Romeo Dallaire, genocide expert Dr. Gerry Caplan and a host of Canadian MPs, CIDA and DFAIT officials.

I also spent considerable time connecting globally with the R2P network, meeting with NGOs and advocacy groups, as well as participating in conferences, seminars and delivering a number of university talks centred on R2P.

Challenges, Direction and What I Have Learned

Three clear challenges that have shaped my new direction and have been the vital learning's from this opportunity include, (i) lack of public awareness, (ii) the stagnancy of the issue in Ottawa and (iii) the realities of international inaction and self-interest.

First, before I jumped into this process, I made so many assumptions about the base of knowledge that individuals at every level would have regarding R2P. What I discovered, very quickly, was that R2P, regardless of its Canadian connection, was unknown beyond the select few in the world of human rights and genocide prevention. This early realization allowed me to quickly step back from 'grassroots mobilization' and move to a new concentration on 'education and awareness'.

Second, I was forced to pause and rethink my initial messaging and advocacy in Ottawa. Even though Canada initiated R2P and was a key player in its endorsement at the UN, there has been a clear loss of momentum and resources dedicated to the issue. Again, making awareness and education the vital next step in getting politicians and policy makers engaged in the true value of R2P and it's Canadian roots.

And lastly, one of the recurring questions that kept coming back to me during all of my meetings was this whole issue of action. What will it truly take for the UN and individual governments to go beyond their own agendas and engage solely for humanitarian reasons? As I moved forward I also made part of my exploration, this whole issue of national self-interest and the perpetuation of the myth that there is such a thing as an 'international community' or a global group think we are all a part of. How does this play a role in intervention and is it a more relevant barrier to inaction, than the massaging of R2P at the UN?

Key Outputs and Outcomes

I have outlined all of my key outputs and outcomes in the attached 'contacts, actions and activities document' however, there are some outcomes I would like to outline here, which will provide the of highlights of my 12-month fellowship.

There are numerous groups working on R2P, and over my fellowship I have strategically built an accessible network and coalition of like minded groups, alongside key individuals, to share ideas with, learn from and partner on activities with. Those important players include the World Federalist Movement, the International Crisis Group, the R2P Coalition and the aforementioned Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, Allan Rock and General Romeo Dallaire, who examines R2P as a sitting member of the UN Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention.

In regards to outreach I successfully (i) placed two op-eds on northern Uganda and the responsibility to protect in the *National Post*, (ii) spoke at a number of university peace week events to talk about R2P and (iii) was a panelist at the University of Winnipeg's Human Rights & Social Justice Conference, where I shared the stage on the topic of war-affected children with General Dallaire.

In partnership with my mentor, Dr. Erin Baines, I also co-hosted a workshop in Vancouver entitled Transnational Advocacy, Peace and Justice in northern Uganda. Beyond the focus on the region, I was also able to insert R2P into the agenda and gain feedback and insights from individuals representing such diverse groups as the United Nations, Quaker Peace and the International Centre for Transitional Justice, as well as local northern Ugandan leaders and human rights advocates. This international group provided me with the harsh reality that R2P is not known at all beyond our Canadian borders. It truly is unknown, even in human rights circles.

And finally, the past four months I have been focused on the development of an integrated documentary and new media awareness campaign in partnership with Trudeau scholar and Action Canada fellow Taylor Owen. We have just finalized an updated version of our vision and have already received some initial interest in the project from DFAIT, which we will be pursuing in the weeks to come.

What's next?

What's next for me is, *Take Responsibility: The Canadian Story of the Responsibility to Protect*, the documentary and new media project noted above, which will be based on the history, success and potential of R2P.

After the genocide in Rwanda, the Canadian government developed the Responsibility to Protect to provide the international community with the tools to intervene. It fought for three years to get it adopted at the United Nations and in 2005, the world unanimously signed on. Yet, humanitarian tragedies continue.

Rhetoric rarely matches reality, especially when it comes to saving strangers. Civil conflict has claimed millions of lives since the end of the Cold War, but the international community continued to put sovereignty before humanity. Recognizing this failure, Canada initiated the idea of R2P, which resulted in a dramatic shift from protecting the rights of states to protecting the lives of people. On paper, human rights now come before power politics. While the

tools to intervene for humanitarian reasons are now clear, the crises continue. What will it take for the world to honour its "Responsibility to Protect"?

The documentary will feature a portrait of the Canadian government's response to the horrifically violent end of the 20th century, including the genocide in Rwanda and the war's in Somalia, Kosovo and Bosnia. While the world cried "never again," Canada sought to change the international system. Through an innovative commission of great thinkers and a diplomatic battle at the UN, Canada helped encourage the world to adopt the responsibility to protect in September 2005. Has it worked? What more needs to be done to ensure that people are protected?

The film and new media website will be used as an educational entry point into a wide civil engagement campaign. In schools, universities and community halls, we will screen the film and bring people into the mass media initiative. Viewers will be angered to action by the movie, and will be provided with a direct and meaningful outlet for social change through the web campaign. Through our new media site, we will provide a means for people to connect with those in conflict zones in new and dramatic ways. Such tools, and many more, will enable an understanding previously impossible.

The two will be symbiotic, self sustainable, inclusive, and Canadian. Our government developed the concept; and this documentary and awareness initiative will take the Responsibility to Protect to the people.

More than anything, I want my future work with R2P to be focused, not on playing the political or policy game, but changing it.

In Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian Bradbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a period at the end.

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