



Rt Hon. Mark Simmonds MP  
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Dear Minister,

As Chairman of the United Nations Association – UK (UNA-UK), I am writing to you on behalf of our UK-wide membership to encourage the Government to increase its capacity to prevent atrocity crimes.

As the world marks twenty years since the genocide in Rwanda, which played a part in motivating UN Member States to adopt the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), it is important to take stock of how the lessons learned from this catastrophe are being put into practice with regard to situations such as Syria, the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

Last week UNA-UK convened a number of international and national experts from Government, Parliament, the United Nations, academia and civil society to examine the substantive policy challenges to the implementation of R2P across a spectrum of conflict prevention activities in development, human rights, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and diplomacy. One of the outcomes of this meeting was a recognition of the potential leadership role the UK could play in demonstrating initiative and creativity in addressing how governments can integrate the R2P principle across government.

We at UNA-UK appreciate the UK's efforts in pressing for action at the Security Council and in championing R2P internationally. We also believe that it is important for the UK to do all it can to ensure that its own systems and policies are working together effectively to prevent and respond to mass atrocities.

One specific measure is the designation of a 'focal point' to support the integration of R2P in national strategies and policies, and the implementation of the focal point's responsibilities across government. In his most recent report to the UN General Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on all Member States to appoint a "senior-level focal point with atrocity prevention responsibilities and adequate resources ... to implement this mandate".

We understand that the UK has made such an appointment. However, there is a lack of clarity within our membership, and amongst UK and international NGOs on the role, remit and current activities of the UK focal point. Our members and supporters - over 13,000 across the country - are interested in understanding how the UK focal point promotes R2P in foreign, defence and development policies at the national level, and supports

international cooperation on early warning and prevention. We believe that the position should serve as a visible champion, hub and driver of action on R2P across government.

As part of our work marking the twentieth year since the Rwandan Genocide, UNA-UK has been compiling letters from its members and supporters calling on the Government to clarify the status of the UK's Focal Point and to ensure that this role is adequately supported and resourced to provide effective leadership on R2P. To date, we have received more than 200 letters in support of this call. A copy of the letter, with signatures, is enclosed.

We believe that the UK can lead by example in this area, and recently commissioned the enclosed report entitled *Mainstreaming the responsibility to protect in UK strategy*, written by Professor Jason Ralph of the University of Leeds. I hope that you will find the report constructive in thinking about how to ensure that atrocity prevention is embedded across government.

UNA-UK is pleased to be working closely with the FCO in a number of areas and we look forward to discussing this important subject in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Greenstock', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock  
Chairman, UNA-UK