

Seminar on

Protection of Civilians

Denmark's new Humanitarian Strategy and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

12 June 2009 at 09:30-13:00
Venue: Landstingssalen i Folketinget (The Parliament)
Christiansborg, Copenhagen K

Hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
Events related to the revision of Strategy for Danish Humanitarian Action

CONCEPT NOTE

Date and format

Seminar on 12 June, 2009, at 09:30-13:00.

Key note speaker

Mr. **Edward Luck**, Special Advisor on R2P to the UN Secretary General.

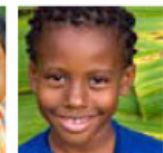
Background

The Strategy for Danish Humanitarian Action is undergoing revision and the new strategy is expected to be launched in August/September 2009. The draft strategy has been in public hearing and is about to be sent to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Danish Parliament for their comments.

As part of the strategy process, a half-day seminar on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) will take place in Parliament on 12 June 2009. The seminar will focus on Protection of Civilians and the concept of R2P. Protection is one of three priority themes of the new Danish strategy with a special focus on gender based violence and children in conflict, as well as access and safety of humanitarian personnel. In lack of security and safe working conditions for relief workers, it becomes more complex and challenging to protect civilians.

Further, in January 2009 the UN Secretary General issued a report on the operationalisation of the 2005 World Summit-resolution on "Responsibility to protect" (R2P). The UN General Assembly will debate the content of the said report as well as options for realising its intentions by end June or the beginning of July this year.





As a normative standard R2P establishes that:

1. national governments have the responsibility to protect the population against violation of masses (genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crime and crimes against humanity)
2. the international community is obliged to support governments to this effect; as well as to
3. ensure protection of civilians, if the nation state is not in a position to do it.

While taking its point of entry in the new Strategy for Danish Humanitarian Action, the seminar will form a platform for a debate amongst Danish stakeholders and actors on how best to promote protection of civilians and security for relief workers – and in the bigger picture how Denmark as a UN member state can contribute to an operationalisation of R2P.

Purpose

The overall purpose of the seminar is:

1. to contribute to the Danish political debate on R2P
2. to inform the Danish public about the new humanitarian strategy and how Protection of civilians is an important priority theme for Danish Humanitarian Action

Participants

Around 100-150 participants drawn from:

- The Danish Parliament – members of the Foreign Affairs Committee
- The Board of Danida
- Danish humanitarian private organisations
- Researchers and academia
- Representatives of UN organisations in Denmark
- Nordic donors

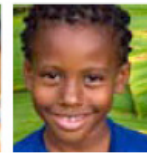
Speakers

State Secretary for Development Policy, **Ib Petersen**, will open the seminar by speaking on *"Denmark's new humanitarian strategy and efforts in the area of protection"*.

The theme R2P will be introduced by Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, **Edward Luck** as key note speaker: *"How Member States can take the concept of Right to Protection (R2P) forward (based on a report from the Secretary General)"*.

In the **Space2Debate** session, prominent experts will debate how Denmark can contribute to moving R2P from theory to practice. The debaters may include **Gareth Evans**, President for ICG and a prominent international player and Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, **Edward Luck**. Other speakers and experts in the field of protection and the R2P are **Dennis McNamara**, Center for Humanitarian Dialogue and **Marieke Wierda**, International Center for Transitional Justice.





Peter Tygesen, Journalist and Author will interview the key note speakers and facilitate the space2debate. Peter Tygesen has also prepared an issue paper on Protection of Civilians for this event which will be available on 12 June.

Key questions for the Space2Debate are:

- What are the immediate obstacles to further the implementation of the R2P principle?
- What are the limits to the use of the R2P principles?
- Who will be the prime movers of furthering the implementation of the R2P principle?
- What can Denmark do to further the implementation of the R2P principle?

