

The UN won't act

LEWIS MACKENZIE (feat. HUGH SEGAL)

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Re: How Canada can help Libya, Feb 25.

Kudos to Senators Hugh Segal and Roméo Dallaire for recommending the imposing of a no-fly-zone over Libya in accordance with the authority and guidance contained in the Canadian-led initiative, Responsibility to Protect (R2P), adopted by the United Nations in 2005.

What a tragedy that R2P will not be the acknowledged justification for taking such action "thanks" to the incestuous decision-making process within the only body responsible for directing such action, the Permanent Five (P5) of the Security Council.

Whenever there has been a crying need to carry out the intent of R2P, that is to say intervene with force when all other means of protecting citizens being brutalized by their own government have failed, there have been and probably always will be at least one P5 Security Council member who will use their veto to prevent such action.

Any number of recent internal conflicts qualified for the implementation of R2P. Darfur and Zimbabwe immediately come to mind and the Security Council's mute response when R2P was mentioned was testament to the ongoing failure of the concept, which glows bright in theory but fails miserably in practice.

The immediate need for imposing a no-fly zone over Libya will only be achieved outside of the Security Council's decision-making by a coalition of the willing. Some nation will have to assume a leadership role and as French President Nicolas Sarkozy was the first to recommend the idea, France would be an obvious choice.

Canada should participate.

LEWIS MACKENZIE,
Major-General (Ret'd), Almonte