

Second Max Perutz Memorial Human Rights Lecture
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“MAINSTREAMING HUMAN RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES” –
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It is an honour to be invited to deliver this lecture to such a distinguished and learned audience. After a long career in Government and the United Nations I now have the luxury of speaking to you simply as a concerned global citizen and a member of civil society which the New York Times once described as ‘that other super power’. I did not have the privilege, as some of you have had, of knowing the late Max Perutz whose great work in chemistry, and especially on the structure of haemoglobin at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge University, won him the Nobel Prize in 1962. Nor am I a scientist engaged, as all of you are, in what one definition of your discipline describes as “the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment”. I was similarly invited by the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs to deliver the Dorothy Crawford Hodgkin Memorial Lecture in 2003 as a tribute to another Cambridge chemist and another Nobel Laureate. I began that lecture, as I do today, by acknowledging that I remain a hapless victim of the hiatus between the “two cultures” of the sciences and the humanities which C.P.Snow famously identified in his 1959 Rede Lecture. That does not prevent me from paying my own modest tribute to the great contribution made by Max Perutz. as a scientist and as a human being.

As a diplomat for most of my working life, devoted to a profession involving the application of intelligence and tact to the management of relations among nation states, one develops a holistic view of international relations. This is an era of globalization, which has accelerated the economic and political integration of our world already shrunk in time and space by the revolution in information and communications technology. We have also to recognize the essential inter-relationship among the three areas of international relations - global peace and security, development and human rights. It is a tripod on which global order and stability rests. However, in reality, we do live in a two-tier world of rich and poor countries; powerful and weak nations; nuclear weapon armed powers and non-nuclear weapon states and many other differences. What can bridge these gaps and unite us all is, firstly, the basic survival instinct of humankind belonging inter-dependently to one planet and forced to devise common solutions to common problems. Secondly there are, amidst the astonishing diversity of the human race, a common set of values and norms which we share. An important part of the Millennium Declaration adopted in September 2000 by the Heads of State and Government assembled at the United Nations in New York was the section identifying the fundamental values essential to international relations in the 21st century. They are Freedom, Equality, Solidarity, Tolerance, Respect for Nature and Shared Responsibility.

Translating these values into practical terms are the universal norms agreed and administered in a rule-based global society.

Scientists, whether in policy making roles within Government or in civil society, by virtue of the objectivity of the empirical methodology they employ, have a major role to play in shaping these norms and ensuring their uniform and consistent application. I must therefore congratulate you on the activities of the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies. If Governments and civil society abdicate their responsibility to protect and promote these universal norms there is a real danger that chauvinism, global terrorism and asymmetric conflict, illicit immigration and people smuggling, organized crime and drug trafficking will be exploited to bridge the gaps between the North and the South aggressively. The fertile ground for this is prepared when norms are inadequately or ineffectively applied or when there is a widespread perception of ‘double standards’. This would convert our multilateral system, with the United Nations at its apex, into a Hobbesian world where the rule of law would not prevail and where in W.B.Yeats’ famous words:

“Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.”

1. The evolution of Human Rights as a global common

The set of norms fundamental to human dignity, human security and human development are what we collectively refer to as Human Rights. They were codified in the historic UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and, subsequently, in a series of legal instruments to which most countries subscribe and have their adherence regularly monitored by peer mechanisms such as the Human Rights Council. This codification followed the horrendous carnage and violence of two World Wars in the last century engulfing civilian populations and making the 20th century the bloodiest in the history of humankind. Prior to that while all cultures and religions had norms and practices relevant to human rights, their non-enforceability as domestic and international law permitted the exploitation of human beings within countries and among nations. This enabled autocracies and feudalism to thrive in domestic situations and for colonialism and imperialism to hold sway internationally. Many empires were built on the exploitation of the human rights of other peoples. Respect for human rights and its enforceability led to democracy in national situations and to decolonization and freedom internationally.

This year we celebrate the bicentennial of the abolition of slavery. An Act of Parliament in Britain, the Slave Trade Act of 25 March 1807, abolished slavery. An excellent film - "Amazing Grace" - released at the beginning of this year, depicts the story of William Wilberforce and his relentless campaign to abolish this evil practice. Millions of human beings were transported from their homes in Africa to North America and other parts of the world with the surplus value of their labour used in building many of the developed nations of today. History records that for approximately 300 years the transatlantic slave trade continued with 12 million West Africans enslaved. No doubt slavery prevailed in the ancient and medieval world and the practice of the citizens of conquered nations being used as slaves was well established. However the transformation of this into a global trade began during the colonial era. No doubt too that the practice of slavery continued well after 1807 and, in spite of Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, bonded labour and other forms of serfdom continue in many countries today enslaving an estimated 27 million people. But the norm rejecting slavery as an especially odious violation of human rights is now widely accepted enhancing the worth and dignity of every human being. It is an example of how a human rights norm has become the common heritage of mankind. We can therefore be confident that other human rights can similarly be widely accepted.

Human rights are not a "white man's burden" or a luxury that only the rich countries can enjoy and enforce elsewhere. It is in the interests of the entire international community that the abolition of slavery is a global public good. It is not a right to be pursued only in courts of law and international human rights fora. It is the common property of the people to be safeguarded and exercised, as with all human rights, in the mainstream of society. Martin Luther King once said - "Become a dedicated fighter for civil rights. It will make you a better doctor, a better lawyer, a better teacher....Convert yourself to the noble struggle for human rights. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country and a better world to live in."

This is particularly important in the current context of the politicization of human rights in international fora. The advocacy of human rights as a foreign policy objective is a legitimate task for any country and President Jimmy Carter will be long remembered for his own role in highlighting human rights in international relations. However, I represented my country for four years in the old and now discredited Commission on Human Rights and was deeply disappointed at the selective choice of cases that were brought before this body for public condemnation to the exclusion of others. Cold War politics at the time and, later, other alliances determined the agenda while the voting followed judgments largely unaffected by human rights criteria. The more egregious cases were, ironically, handled under a confidential '1503' procedure. In contrast, the Human Rights Committee and other investigative procedures to ascertain how states were fulfilling their obligations under the various human rights instruments were conducted professionally and transparently with civil society participation. But they were generally unpublicized and ignored. Regrettably the situation has not changed significantly in the new Human Rights Council. This has led to developing countries viewing human rights

as a political weapon being used selectively by the developed countries. A siege mentality is developed and defensive walls are erected as if human rights are a tool of neo-colonialism instead of it being in the common interest of all humankind. Nationalist forces rally to the cause and in the demagoguery that follows the fact that respect for human rights is in the fundamental national interest of each and every country is forgotten. Human rights are a global common in the same way as the protection of the environment and preventing climate change is and has to be mainstreamed in our collective consciousness. No country has a perfect human rights record. A collective and co-operative effort to advance the cause of human rights throughout the world must replace the adversarial and sanctimonious finger-pointing exercise that contemporary human rights dialogues have descended into.

In my own country, Sri Lanka, I have seen negative attitudes transformed into active co-operation with the UN, the willing adoption of human rights training in the armed forces and a widespread awareness of human rights in our society through a healthy interaction between Government and civil society. However the recrudescence of conflict has once again led to a streak of xenophobia in political reactions to foreign criticism of our human rights situation while local non-governmental organizations engaged in human rights and humanitarian work are viewed suspiciously as unpatriotic agents of foreign interests. These views are fanned by extremist groups hiding under the cloak of patriotism to advance their own agendas. Human rights form a value-based system whereby we pay respect to our own citizens as equal human beings. There can, and should be, no one more concerned about the human rights of a country than its own citizens. The responsibility to protect our people falls primarily on us and our Governments. We are entitled to seek the support of foreign partners to strengthen our capacity to protect and promote the human rights of our citizens. But should we fail in our responsibilities we must be ready to listen to constructive suggestions from foreign governments and experts. It is in this spirit that the Bush Administration was criticized over the detentions in Guantanamo and the atrocities of Abu Ghraib prison and other places. These continue to be unacceptable derogations of human rights and international humanitarian law which the so-called 'war on terrorism' can in no way justify.

In the traditional societies of all continents while inequalities existed there was also the concept of rights and obligations at least in a top-down dimension. Codes of conduct existed for monarchs and nobility. A sense of community prevailed and the common good was a counter-balance for individual benefits usually to the serious disadvantage of individual human rights. Modern industrialized societies have become more individual-centric often at the sacrifice of the community's interests. It will be noted that I make the distinction between traditional societies and modern societies and not between Western and Eastern not only because it is more accurate but also because of the false dichotomies that prevail in the contemporary discourse on human rights. Tradition and modernization can co-exist in some societies as in Japan. What has happened in modern societies with the emphasis on the individual is the stress on rights to the near exclusion of concepts of responsibilities and duties. Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

states clearly that “Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible”. Human rights do recognize group rights and indeed the right to development, social and cultural rights are an illustration of this. We need a balance between individual rights and community or group rights and this can be achieved if there is a heightened consciousness about the individual’s responsibilities to the group and the group’s duties to uphold individual rights. That is what I mean by ‘mainstreaming’ – a recognition throughout society of mutual obligations of the individual to society and society to the individual. That recognition should of course transcend ethnicity, religion, colour, social status, income levels and other differences. In an era of globalization the extended group or community is in fact our entire planet.

2. The scientist and weapons production

I move logically to the responsibilities and duties of the scientist in mainstreaming human rights in society. All professions have their responsibilities and duties to society but perhaps the responsibility of the scientist at the cutting edge of technological advances and scientific experimentation in the care of human health is more onerous. Scientists do have greater and more complex ethical problems to confront than others in the maintenance of human rights. With business the UN was able to establish the Global Compact to ensure corporate social responsibility and the observance of human rights norms by companies. The first two principles of the UN Global Compact, which are derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are: -

- Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuse.

A similar compact should be possible with the scientific community ideally through Academies of Sciences. Certainly in the defence of national interests scientists are called upon today to research, develop and produce weapons in an ongoing war effort or in preparation for war or for export. There can be no greater right than the right to life which is directly threatened by weapons of war and especially by weapons of mass destruction. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), on whose Governing Board I serve, has revealed that world military expenditure in 2005 was \$ 1118 billion or \$ 173 per capita surpassing the figures of the Cold War period with the USA accounting for 48 per cent of that. In stark contrast we have over a billion people living under the poverty line of one dollar per day.

I am proud to belong to the disarmament community which, over the years, has attempted to regulate conventional weapons and eliminate weapons of mass destruction. The web of treaties, both multilateral and bilateral, that have been negotiated are a tribute to this effort at preserving the human right to life and the prevention of human suffering caused

by the use of weapons and the fear and intimidation instilled by the threat to use them. These treaties have been negotiated through the excellent co-operation between diplomats and scientists which continues in the verification of some of these treaties. That link must be fortified. Among weapons of mass destruction, Biological and Toxic Weapons have been banned by a treaty signed in 1972 although attempts to build verification provisions for it and establish an organization to implement it were thwarted by the Bush Administration recently. Chemical Weapons have also been outlawed by the convention signed in 1993 and is being implemented with stringent and intrusive verification measures by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague.

Thus only nuclear weapons remain the weapon of mass destruction that is not outlawed. Eight countries – five within the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and three outside it – continue to have about 27,000 nuclear weapons and of them 12,000 are deployed on launch-on-warning status. Nuclear weapons are designed to cause terror and destruction on a vastly greater scale than any conventional weapon killing thousands in a single attack with ecological and genetic effects that can persist indefinitely. The risk of the use of nuclear weapons by states or terrorists, by accident or design, has increased in recent years. The combination of this with the certainty of climate change presents an ominous challenge to humanity. I use this platform to appeal to the international scientific community on behalf of the human rights of all non-nuclear weapon states - help us to delegitimise nuclear weapons. You will be following in the footsteps of several others like the so-called “father of the atomic bomb” Robert Oppenheimer. Sir Joseph Rotblat walked out of the Manhattan Project as a conscientious objector and went on to be a founder of the Pugwash movement in 1957 and win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995. We all know that nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented and that the knowledge of how to build weapons is today publicly available on Internet to students. Terrorists are known to be looking for this expertise and for the material and technology that is needed. That is why we need a Nuclear Weapon Convention urgently to outlaw these weapons in a verifiable manner.

The focus today is on the nuclear proliferation dangers in the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) and in Iran. While diplomatic efforts must continue to prevent those countries from acquiring nuclear weapons, we must also work towards eliminating all nuclear weapons. Two international commissions of which I was a member recognized the symbiotic link between nuclear disarmament and nuclear proliferation. The Canberra Commission sponsored by the then Australian Government, said in 1996 " Nuclear weapons are held by a handful of states which insist that these weapons provide unique security benefits and yet reserve uniquely to themselves the right to own them. This situation is highly discriminatory and thus unstable; it cannot be sustained. The possession of nuclear weapons by any state is a constant stimulus to other states to acquire them". The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, sponsored by the Swedish Government and chaired by Dr.Hans Blix, reiterated this ten years later in 2006, adding that "So long as any such weapons remain in any state's arsenal, there is a high

risk that they will one day be used, by design or accident. Any such use would be catastrophic."

What I said to the Pugwash Conference four years ago remains relevant today. The role of the scientist in terms of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto released on 9 July 1955 assumes great importance. Codes of ethics ensure that human rights will be respected. The urgent need for a code of ethics to govern scientists working in the defence sectors in all countries cannot be overemphasized. The inherent ambiguities in dual use technology are of course difficult and complex. Despite this, or precisely because of this, a code of ethics and a system of mentoring younger scientists can help to ensure moral clarity where legal precision may be difficult to achieve. Research and Development programmes in the weapon industry have to depend on scientists. We are faced with the threat of the Second Nuclear Age when the actual use of nuclear weapons is being contemplated. The Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) has produced new generations of conventional weapons and the possible development of new types of weapons including those based on new physical principles (I refer here to kinetic and laser weapons as an example). The need is for a code of ethics for application across national boundaries. It will prohibit scientists from engaging in any activities that contravene existing treaties and conventions in the arms limitation and disarmament field. Where new weapons or refinements of existing weapon technologies are contemplated the principles of humanitarian law and the protection of civilians must be the guideline. National scientific bodies such as Academies of Sciences and international scientific organizations must take responsibility for harmonizing codes of ethics and for their implementation. Complaints must be filed against a scientist for violating the code of ethics and an inquiry must be instituted. If the verdict is guilty the withdrawal of professional membership and recognition must follow. It is only by maintaining the highest standards that we can ensure that scientists do not allow their skills to be subverted or exploited. Where scientists, especially those in dictatorships, have been coerced, whistle-blowing should be encouraged within the code of ethics as part of our common responsibility to protect humanity and human rights. With the functioning of the International Criminal Court it would follow automatically that any scientist found guilty in that forum should automatically be struck off professional rolls and be disqualified from pursuing his or her scientific career.

The scientific community can do more. Verification technology is an area where a great deal of good work has already been accomplished. The state of the art technology installed in Vienna and other parts of the world by the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBT and IAEA's technical equipment and expertise in implementing safeguards agreements are some outstanding examples. More needs to be done in order to remain several steps ahead of violators of treaties and to detect clandestine programmes. Satellite imagery has been developed to a remarkable level of accuracy. Although national intelligence agencies do not divulge their high resolution imagery even to the UN, commercially available imagery has enabled NGOs like the Federation of American Scientists and others to monitor disarmament related developments and inform the

general public of their findings through Internet and other channels. Greater availability to the public of high-resolution satellite imagery and improvements in the quality and the reading of this imagery will make the detection of clandestine programmes conducted both by states and terrorist groups more likely. It will also make for a better informed public at a time when civil liberties are being curtailed and transparency sacrificed in the campaign against terrorism. The benefits also include greater confidence in the verifiability of disarmament agreements and greater confidence that cheats do not get away with their bad faith actions. Other verification devices and aids could be invented and popularized as a confidence-building infrastructure to the web of treaties and conventions that restrain the unbridled pursuit of weapon development. Radar and early warning systems are also technological areas by which conflicts can be prevented. Their potential has to be exploited through the collective work of scientists. A Canadian proposal for a peacekeeping satellite - PAXSAT - remains unimplemented for lack of funds while billions of dollars are spent on new weapons. Scientists can be at the forefront of public campaigns demanding more resources for peaceful research to ensure a safer and better world.

It was announced on March 2, 2007 that the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California had won the competition for designing the first new nuclear weapon in nearly two decades – the Reliable Replacement Weapon (RRW). It will replace the W-6 warhead on missiles deployed on submarines. The nuclear arms race which we thought had ended with the Cold War is being resumed and already other nuclear weapon states are modernizing their weapons. In the UK a decision has been taken to replace the Trident system despite widespread protests. The scientists involved in all these programmes have the choice of refusing to lend their expertise to the manufacture and maintenance of nuclear weapons.

3. The scientist and other aspects of Human Rights

Human rights cover a vast range. Our existence on this planet is not only challenged by the possession and proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is also imperiled by the prospect of climate change. Former US Vice-President Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" is more than an Oscar-winning documentary. It dramatizes the message in scientific reports. The report of a team in the UK led by Sir Nicholas Stern predicted a major global economic downturn comparable to the Great Depression of 1929 as a consequence of climate change. This was followed by the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which asserted that global change would lead to a probable temperature rise of 1.8 C and 4 C by the end of the century; a sea level rise by 28-43 cm; a disappearance of Arctic summer sea ice in the second half of this century; an increase in heat waves and an increase in tropical storm intensity. All this was incontrovertibly described as being 'very likely' to be caused by human actions and in particular the emissions of greenhouse gases. The human rights of those who live in countries where greenhouse gas emissions are high will be affected as much as those in other countries.

I have been reading Jarred Diamond's impressive book "Collapse". Not every society faced by environmental collapse has in fact gone under like Norse Greenland or the Mayan civilization. Of the five possible contributing factors of environmental damage, climate change, hostile neighbours, friendly trade partners and society's response to its environmental problems Diamond identifies the last as the most significant. It is this that makes collapse far from inevitable with long term planning and a willingness to reconsider core values. Between total collapse and survival by pursuing the right policies there could be periods of crisis, displacement of populations, riots, water and food scarcities and other emergencies during which human rights will be seriously imperiled if not violated. Scientists must therefore lead governments in making the necessary changes and manage their implementation. The Chicago-based Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the Doomsday Clock on 18 January, 2007 from seven to five minutes to midnight both because of the threat of nuclear weapons and the danger of climate change. The statement said "Turning back the Clock will depend on humanity's ability to think in new ways about how to cooperate to achieve common goals. We ask scientists, in the words of Eugene Rabinowitch, not to "retire in resignation and despair to their laboratories" but to publicly engage these issues and make their voices heard. And we implore governments to actively engage the scientific community for sound, nonpartisan technical advice. We urge immediate attention to climate change and caution those who believe nuclear energy is a problem-free solution. Finally, and most importantly, we call upon policy and opinion leaders, business and civic leaders, and the public to place the dangers of nuclear weapons at the top of their agendas for action."

Some areas at the frontiers of scientific endeavour can come into conflict with human rights like the advances in genetics and biology which have opened new possibilities--both positive and troubling. With stem cell research and other work on genetic material biologists can fight disease better and improve human health. At the same time there are opportunities to program organisms for wrong purposes. These emerging technologies are accessible to an increasingly wider circle. As the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists states "The emergence of nanotechnology--manufacturing at the molecular or atomic level--presents similar concerns, especially if coupled with chemical and biological weapons, explosives, or missiles. Such combinations could result in highly destructive missiles the size of an insect and microscopic delivery systems for dangerous pathogens." Unscrupulous political leaders and terrorist groups will seek scientists willing to violate human rights for their own ends. The Co-operative Threat Reduction programme piloted by Senators Lugar and Nunn for countries in the former Soviet Union and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative are both aimed at ensuring that scientists who have worked on weapons programmes are not lured away by offers to place their expertise at the disposal of terrorist groups or other states.

Human rights education is another area where scientists can play an active role. UNESCO has programmes for this and the involvement of young scientists in them

would be very advantageous. Human rights can also be integrated into other areas of activity. For example the High Commissioner for Human Rights is mandated to play an important role in the realization of the right to development.

4. The future of Human Rights

In 1787 when the anti-slavery movement began about three-quarters of the people in the world were under some form of enslavement, serfdom, debt bondage or indentured servitude. Twenty years later slavery was legally abolished in Britain. Faced with other human rights violations today 200 years later this is an encouraging fact. Another source of encouragement is the fact that the system of apartheid crumbled in our lifetime through the indomitable courage of Nelson Mandela and his African National Congress. But it was the global effort to end apartheid through economic and trade boycotts, the expulsion of the apartheid regime of South Africa from global organizations and international sports competitions and grass-roots campaigns and public opinion throughout the world that helped. It is the same global effort that is needed to ensure respect for all human rights in all countries at all times.

Human rights programmes have to be integrated into the broad range of other activities. That continues to be done and the application of rights-based approaches is appropriate. The latest human rights instrument - the first in the 21st century - to be concluded is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol which countries signed immediately it was opened for signature in Geneva on the 30th March this year. It will bring relief to an estimated 650 million disabled people in the world. It is an illustration of how human rights can advance to the benefit of people.

Another area in which advance has been made and can be extended is with the International Criminal Court. The establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court was prompted by a long felt desire to prosecute crimes such as genocide. Building on the experience of ad hoc tribunals such as the one established after the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia an International Criminal Court finally commenced in March 2003 after the Rome Statute entered into force in 2002. Confined for now to the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes it is possible for other violations of human rights to be prosecuted and punished in the future. It is also important that the ICC should be universalized so that more countries accept its jurisdiction. This is a certain way of ensuring respect for human rights and fighting the problem of impunity especially in conflict situations. Individual responsibility is a fundamental aspect of human rights enforcement and the ICC has proved not to be deterred by the high office of persons responsible for punishable offences.

The report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty published in December 2001 helped to clarify what was hitherto vaguely and controversially referred as "humanitarian intervention". The classic political science concept of "State Sovereignty" was expanded to include responsibilities with the primary responsibility of the state being the protection of its people. The Commission stated as a basic principle that "Where a population is suffering serious harm, as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international responsibility to protect". The Commission however prescribed steps for the exercise of this international responsibility by citing the UN Charter and the need for Security Council authority.

The sensitivity of nation states recently emerged from colonialism over state sovereignty is understandable. However in an interdependent world many state functions have to be co-ordinated at a global level to increase efficiency. This is true of fundamental human rights as well. Thus in the Outcome Document of the Heads of State and Government following the UN General Assembly Summit there was agreement contained in paragraph 139 which stated: -

"The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We stress the need for the General Assembly to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law. We also intend to commit ourselves, as necessary and appropriate, to helping States build capacity to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and to assisting those which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out."

This is the agreement at the Summit level. We have now to ensure its consistent practice. It would be a confirmation that human security is our common concern and that no state can hide behind the concept of state sovereignty. Nor can we, as citizens of one particular country be nationalist on human rights if we have failed in our duty and responsibility to protect our fellow-citizens from violations of their human rights. The world has come a long way to assert and practise the principle that we are our brothers' keepers - and our sisters' keepers as well.