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MEDIA RELEASE

International diplomats and players to re-energize Responsibility to Protect at SFU conference

Gareth Evans hosts free public dialogue on human rights with Canadian officials Lloyd Axworthy, Allan Rock, Romeo Dallaire and Jennifer Welsh

March 22, 2017

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The world's foremost authorities on Responsibility to Protect (R2P)—an United Nations initiative to prevent and stop genocides, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity—will convene at Simon Fraser University on Wednesday, March 22 to revitalize global efforts and prevent further global atrocities.

Convened by **The Simons Foundation**, the Hon. Gareth Evans, former Australian foreign minister and current Simons Visiting Chair in Dialogue in International Law and Human Security, will chair the conference with the aim of shifting rhetorical commitment to effective action.

Evans, along with Canadian human rights leaders Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, Hon. Allan Rock, Hon. Romeo Dallaire and United Nations Secretary-General's Special Adviser Jennifer Welsh, will conduct a public dialogue on the evening of Wednesday, March 22, examining the current state of R2P, international security, and, human rights.

The event at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue is free but **requires registration** to attend.

The Simons Foundation Distinguished Visiting Fellow in Dialogue on International Law and Human Security enhances the understanding and raises the public profile of key international issues that affect the welfare and well-being of present and future generations and promotes public debate with respect to these issues.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Mass atrocities and crimes against humanity continue to occur with little or no global action. According to the Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect, over 465,000 people have been killed since the beginning of the Syrian war in 2011. According to UNICEF, 650 Syrian children were killed in 2016.

FAST FACTS:

- In 2000, the Canadian government established the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in response to mass atrocities found in Rwanda, Srebrenica and Kosovo.
- The Commission, co-chaired by Australia's former Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and Algerian diplomat and UN Africa Advisor, Mohamed Sahnoun, drafted the R2P report in 2001.

- The report changed the definition of non-intervention in state sovereignty by adding that nation states have a responsibility to their own population not to commit mass atrocities or allow them to occur.
- Additionally, the report outlined that other states have a responsibility to assist those lacking the capacity to protect and the international community has the responsibility to respond with timely and decisive action (including coercive military force authorized by the Security Council) if a state is failing to meet its protection responsibilities.
- R2P was formally adopted by all United Nation member states at the UN World Summit in 2005.

LEARN MORE:

- [The Simons Foundation](#)
- [SFU's Centre for Dialogue](#)
- [Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect](#)

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 145,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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