The Ethics of Intervention: Human Rights, National Sovereignty, and the Balance of Risk

THIS BIBLIOGRAPHY

The British Library is providing background information and sources for further reading about each topic featured in Speakers’ Corner Trust’s Forum for Debate.

The focus of each bibliography will be on recent work that is accessible to someone with a general interest in the topic. It does not aim to be comprehensive, and does not cover in detail works written mainly for professional and academic audiences. All of the references in this resource guide are to materials that are either available without charge through the internet, or that may be accessed at the Library reading rooms in London. Many should also be readily available through local public libraries or bookshops.

Speakers’ Corner Trust is a registered charity which promotes free expression and public debate. The Forum for Debate series covers issues of general public interest, with invited contributions from policy workers, commentators, academics and campaigners on either side of the debate. More information can be found on the Speakers’ Corner website at: http://www.speakerscornertrust.org/forum/forum-for-debate/


National sovereignty has long been held as an essential principle for maintaining international peace and security. At the same time, it has been breached on many occasions. The United Nations recognises the importance of national sovereignty in its founding charter, but also reserves the right to intervene in the cause of international security. The development of thinking about universal rights has added a further dimension: whether it can be right for other countries to intervene in another nation where the security of that nation’s people appears to be at stake.

In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty published its report on ‘The Responsibility to Protect’. This was developed in response to a call by the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, to reconcile the demands of state sovereignty with those of universal human rights. Responsibility to Protect set out obligations to intervene in cases where the lives and well-being of people were put at risk by the actions or inaction of a state. In extreme situations, intervention might include military action of some form.

However, critics have noted problems with Responsibility to Protect. In practice, it is difficult to express, and there has rarely been agreement about its application by the UN Security Council. Some argue that it has little to offer regarding the practicalities of military intervention, and that its requirements could lead to more harm in interventions that are poorly planned or that lack grassroots support. Further, some would argue that military interventions are always conducted on the basis of national self-interest,
however they are justified by the participating nations, and that the principles of ‘Just War’ provide a better guide to limiting the damage of armed conflict.

Arguments about the legitimacy of military interventions have been kept very much in the public spotlight through recent wars in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, and current activity in Libya. Occasions where military intervention has not occurred can prove similarly controversial. For many, it remains the case that the ethical, practical and legal dimensions of military intervention remain unresolved.

**BOOKS AND REPORTS**


An analysis and personal reflection on armed intervention and the politics of post-conflict reconstruction.


This report was developed in answer to a challenge from the then United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, to reach an agreement on the issue of the ‘right of humanitarian intervention’. The ‘responsibility to protect’ proposed that sovereign states
had, ‘a responsibility to protect their own citizens from avoidable catastrophe, but that when they are unwilling or unable to do so, that responsibility must be borne by the broader community of states’.

A collection of essays on humanitarian intervention, examining the roles of civil society organisations (international NGOs and grassroots) and military force.


A critical analysis of legal justifications given for the use of force, arguing that national self-interest has often been a stronger influence than humanitarian aims.


This book examines political communication of states in international relations. Scheipers identifies and describes discourses as legalistic, interventionist, sovereigntist and progressivist.


Available in the British Library: from ESTAR electronic journals

Available in the British Library at: YC.2006.a.13598

**UK Government defence and security strategies:**

**A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy.** Parliamentary Paper Cm 7953. October 2010
Available at the British Library: ask at Social Sciences Reference Desk
Available online from: [http://www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

**Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security review.** Parliamentary Paper Cm 7948. October 2010.
Available at the British Library: ask at Social Sciences Reference Desk
Available online from: [http://www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

**JOURNALS**

The British Library collects hundreds of journals from around the world, which provide comparative and critical analysis of humanitarian intervention and the legal and ethical context of international relations. Readers can access these in our Reading Rooms. In many cases articles can be purchased online. You can search hundreds of thousands of journal articles from *Explore the British Library*, available from our website at [http://www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk).

Following are a selection of journals in this field:

**Conflict Security Development**

**Ethics and International Affairs**

**Foreign Affairs**

**International Affairs**

**International Security**

**Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding**

**Review of International Studies**
NEWS AND DEBATE


RESOURCES ON THE WEB

21st Century War and Ethics
A series of monthly articles published online by the Carnegie Council.

ACCORD – African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
ACCORD is a South Africa based organisation that works across the continent to promote the peaceful resolution of conflict, prevention of armed conflict, and effective peacekeeping. The website provides free access to news, publications and more information about their work.

ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN is an association of 10 Southeast Asian counties, which promotes greater economic cooperation, social and cultural development, and peace and stability through the region. Current activities include a blueprint for the establishment of a Political-Security Community, and proposed procedures for military assistance in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (the latter can be downloaded at [http://www.aseansec.org/19539.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/19539.htm))

Chatham House
A leading centre for research, debate and publication on international affairs. Their website has news and commentary on current events across the world, and details of their forthcoming publications and events.

Charter of the United Nations
The United Nations can, in specific cases and with the consent of the Security Council, legitimise the use of force against member nations. Chapter 5 sets out the role of the Security Council, with following chapters discussing the settlement of disputes and intervention. More generally, the UN Charter strongly defends the sovereign rights of nations.
The 2011 Development Report focuses on the effects of violent conflict and instability, estimating that 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by violent conflict. Part two of the report has case studies on national and international responses, including civil society, military and other contributions to ending violence. The website provides the full text of the report alongside supporting information and data.

European Union – European External Action Service
http://eeas.europa.eu/
The EEAS supports the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The website contains news relating to EU humanitarian assistance, statements and speeches by the High Representative.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office – UK government policies and activity across the Middle East and North Africa
News on activities relating to Libya can be found at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global-issues/mena/libya/

Foreign and Commonwealth Office – The UK effort in Afghanistan
Explains the rationale for UK activity in Afghanistan and links to monthly reports.

Human Security Gateway
http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/
A database of 30,000 resources. Topic gateways provide selected reports and articles on human rights, conflict prevention, peacemaking and human security.

International Institute for Strategic Studies
http://www.iiss.org/
The IISS provides research, publishing and events relating to international relations, aimed at government and business audiences. The IISS is a membership organisation, and access to most of the web resources is by subscription or purchase. The website provides details of current research, events and publications.

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)
http://www.isaf.nato.int/
ISAF has a mandate to support the government of Afghanistan to reduce insurgency, support the Afghan National Security Forces and contribute to a secure environment for socio-economic development and improvements in governance. Since 2003, ISAF has been led by NATO. The website has annual reports, news and information for press.

The Iraq Inquiry
http://www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/
The inquiry covers all aspects of the UK’s involvement in, and planning for, conflict in Iraq. The website includes video and written evidence given at the inquiry, as well as reports and timetables for inquiry sessions.
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
http://www.nato.int
NATO was set up following the second World War to provide mutual assistance in
defence for member countries in Europe and the US. Since then, its membership has
expanded, and it has begun to take responsibility for military actions outside Europe. It
leads international military activities in Afghanistan, and, more recently, in Libya.

Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)
http://www.rusi.org/
Founded in 1831 by the Duke of Wellington, RUSI is an independent Think Tank for
defence and security research. RUSI publishes a journal, news reports and The Whitehall
Papers, a series of in-depth reports on security and defence issues.

The Stanley Foundation
http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/index.cfm
The Stanley Foundation promotes global peace through encouraging discussion and
supporting policy formation. It publishes reports, videos and other media and organises
conferences and events. It’s publications, including several on responsibility to protect,
may be downloaded free from the resources section of its website.

United Nations Security Council
http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/
The Security Council has responsibility for the international maintenance of peace and
security. It can issue cease-fire directives, impose economic sanctions and recommend
collective military action. The UN Security Council is often described as the only body
that can legitimise military intervention in a sovereign state.
HOW THE LIBRARY CAN HELP YOU TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC

The British Library holds reports, books and journals from all over the world, covering many issues of importance to the way we live our lives. Much of this is recorded in our Library Catalogue, ‘Explore the British Library’ which you can find from our home page at http://www.bl.uk. We also subscribe to databases that you can use to keep up to date with current research. Some of these collections and services that are relevant to international relations and security are:

Digital National Security Archive
Digitised copies of more than 80,000 declassified US government documents. Special collections describe US activity in Central and South America, the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia.

International Political Science Abstracts
Search across hundreds of politics journals.

Inter-Governmental Organisations
Inter-Governmental Organisations have been key to co-ordinating humanitarian intervention, and legitimising armed intervention. The Library is a depository for several IGOs and their agencies, such as the European Union and United Nations. We hold all print materials produced by these organisations, and provide access to databases and other tools to support research.
Find out more about our collections at: http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/offpubs/index.html

International Relations – Electronic Resources
A listing of resources of interest to people researching international relations. Most of the entries are to freely available websites and databases. http://www.bl.uk/eresources/socsci/intrelations.html

How to get a reader’s pass
You will need a reader’s pass to visit our Reading Rooms. Details on how to do this, and what information you will need to bring with you, can be found at: http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/inrrooms/stp/register/stpregister.html

More bibliographies on subjects relating to social sciences can be found at: http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelpsubject/socsci/topbib/bibliographies.html