



Peace and Security Funders Group

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FUNDERS GROUP

## IHRFG-PSFG FEDERAL POLICY BRIEFING WASHINGTON DC

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### PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

Wednesday, March 30, 2011

11:15am – 12:15pm

*Speaker:*

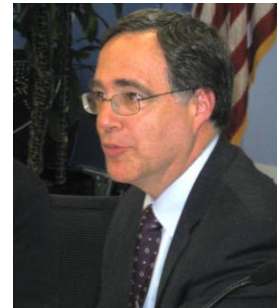
**David Abramowitz, Director, Policy and Government Relations, Humanity United**

*Moderator:*

**Katherine Magraw, Director, Peace and Security Funders Group**

During this session David Abramowitz explored the topics of civilian protection and the responsibility to protect with briefing participants.

- The United Nations Security Council avoids using “responsibility to protect”, due to state sovereignty concerns. The current situation in Libya uses “civilian protection” language. Many believe that in Libya, if steps were not taken, there would have been mass violence. However taking this action does have implications for civilian protection work moving forward.
- The UN Security Council is also quite alarmed by the situation in the Ivory Coast and has authorized 2,000 additional peacekeepers, which they may pull from Liberia. However with the upcoming election in Liberia and the quantity of Ivorian refugees entering the country, this action may have detrimental ramifications within Liberia.
- The French and Americans are working on a new Security Council resolution related to incitement.
- Important to consider this question: What are the right mechanisms to use regarding civilian protection? Act where we have the opportunity and responsibility to act.
- Will uprisings elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa collapse the political party in the north of Sudan?



### Question & Answer:

**Q:** With refugees spilling into Liberia, some Liberians fighting in the Ivory Coast, and the upcoming election, Liberia could fall into conflict. Are there any suggestions for funders wanting to support groups in Liberia?

**A:** There are some foundations already involved in supporting civil society in Liberia. Chevron recently made a deal with Liberia to explore off-shore. Government rents from this may contribute to a power struggle during the elections. There is a de facto civil war in the Ivory Coast and there is a likelihood of

the conflict spilling into Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. There doesn't seem to be a 'right to protect' solution; the boat has been missed to work through diplomatic means, there is a need for work on the ground.

Comment: Liberia is a really interesting case study for philanthropy. The Liberian government has formed a philanthropy secretariat to gather philanthropic advice.