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<https://www.fidh.org/International-Federation-for-Human-Rights/united-nations/security-council/united-nations-limiting-the-use-of-veto-in-case-of-mass-atrocity>

# United Nations : Limiting the use of veto in case of mass atrocity crimes

- [english] - United Nations - Security Council -

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## **Description:**

FIDH an organisation representing 178 organisations worldwide expresses its support to the idea that permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) should voluntarily agree to refrain from using their veto in situations involving mass atrocity crimes.

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**(New-York, 30 September 2015) FIDH an organisation representing 178 organisations worldwide expresses its support to the idea that permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) should voluntarily agree to refrain from using their veto in situations involving mass atrocity crimes.**

Two initiatives are being discussed, in response to the repeated use of veto powers during major crises and to remind the international community that it has the responsibility to protect those threatened by genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity and that the Permanent members of the UNSC (P5) have a responsibility not to veto when the world needs them to respond and to take action.

Sadly, in some of the most tragic examples of our modern times, on too many occasions the veto has been exercised by some of the P5 to protect the governments of Syria, Israel or Russia from resolutions meant to address crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against the civilian populations of Palestine, Syria or Ukraine.

UNSC Permanent members have the responsibility of fostering cooperation within the Security Council so that the United Nations can resolve international conflicts, ensure effective compliance with international law and protect civilian populations. By failing to create an environment that is conducive to cooperation, the permanent members have failed to fulfill their individual and collective responsibilities.

Under a proposal actively pursued by France and Mexico, when faced with such situations, and in order to overcome the UNSC paralysis, the permanent members would abstain from using their veto powers in cases of mass atrocities.

A parallel initiative developed by the members of the ACT (Accountability, Coherence, Transparency) Group is calling for the adoption of a Code of Conduct, under which all UN Member States who endorse the code and not just the UNSC's permanent members would pledge not to vote against a draft resolution before the Security Council that aim to prevent or respond to atrocity crimes.

As this year will mark the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, the international community must impress upon the UNSC Permanent members that they need to live up to their responsibilities and urge them to agree to a moratorium on the use of veto in mass atrocity crimes and adopt the political declaration presented by France and Mexico in that regard. We also encourage ACT to continue their advocacy complementary to the French and Mexican initiative.