



*Abstract of the lecture on Monday, 18 July 2022*

**Morally mandatory securitization: Implications for the responsibility to protect**

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The Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) is an international norm that seeks to ensure that individual states and the international community act to prevent or react to four atrocity crimes: genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Since its endorsement at the 2005 World Outcome Summit RtoP has become a staple in scholarly and practitioner-led discourse and it has made a tangible positive difference in the world. Still, RtoP suffers several significant weaknesses. Among these the following three stand out: 1) problems associated with armed humanitarian intervention (e.g., mission-creep, abuse, or fear of being invaded); 2) inaction or rather selective action (Libya, but not Syria) and 3) narrowness of scope (why only atrocity crimes and not also environmental disaster?)

In this talk Dr Rita Floyd seeks to demonstrate how her new theory of morally mandatory securitization can refocus RtoP and help to alleviate these shortcomings. Morally mandatory securitization is the moral duty or obligation to use exceptional measures short of war in self-and other-defence from intended and intent-lacking threats. This concept/theory builds on Floyd's earlier work (2019) on just securitization, which holds that the initiation of securitization (the use of threat-dependent extraordinary emergency measures coupled with threat articulation) is morally permissible, provided a range of criteria are satisfied namely: just cause (just reason + just referent object), right intention, proportionality, and a reasonable chance of success.

Floyd argues that just securitization is supererogatory, which is to say, 'good to do but not wrong not to do'. She further argues that securitization is right to do and wrong not to do (i.e., obligatory) when actors have sufficient certainty that politicization does not work to satisfy just cause. She suggests that would-be securitizing actors have that certainty only when less harmful alternatives to securitization (i.e., politicization) have been tried and have failed to satisfy just cause, not when - as is the case for just securitization - the chances of securitization's likely success vis-a vis alternatives have been anticipated *ex ante*. Floyd holds that when alternatives have failed would-be securitizing actors no longer simply have a just cause to securitize, but instead a 'must cause'.

Floyd goes on to explain what mandatory securitization and must cause mean for RtoP. She argues that at the systemic level RtoP amounts to the extent of morally mandatory securitization in practice, but she goes on to argue that even if RtoP was in perfect working order and always acted on, it does not cover the moral duties of the UNSC regarding securitization, notably it does not cover intent-lacking threats. She then shows how mandatory securitization can refocus and thus rescue ideas contained RtoP. Thus, mandatory securitization usefully straddles RtoP's responsibility to prevent and the responsibility to react, while full-scale military intervention/ war, which many state actors see as tantamount to the responsibility to react, is outside of securitization. Likewise, 'must cause' offers a clearer threshold for action than conscious shocking atrocity crimes.

In summary, Floyd claims that morally mandatory securitization can alleviate some of the shortcomings of RtoP, rendering the same more timely, less controversial, more effective, and more in line with the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty's ideal of R2P, which first introduced the concept.

**Dr Rita Floyd is Associate Professor in Conflict and Security at the University of Birmingham, UK. She has published widely on security theory and environmental security including two monographs with Cambridge University Press. *The morality of security: A theory of just securitization* (2019) and *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy* (2010). She lives with her husband and their two children at the edge of the Cotswolds.**