For someone who considers himself a friend of Canada, having attended McGill and Université Laval, it's always a great pleasure to come back to Canada, and especially having such great hosts.

As it has been mentioned, the Mexican delegation tried to be here in the largest number possible of our members, so we are really delighted to be here and thankful to our Canadian hosts.

I also have to pay tribute to the members of this panel because they are very seasoned diplomats and politicians. I have been asked to step in for one of our colleagues who couldn't make it to this meeting. So R2P not being my field of expertise, I might as well follow the advice that was given to us by George Bernard Shaw and speak very slowly.

I want to highlight three points, and they're all related to what Lloyd Axworthy has mentioned. The details, the implementation of something that is a very good idea, but then again, the implementation of it is to be the focus of my remarks.

One is the selectivity in choosing when and how to intervene, who makes the decision on what grounds, and who are the good guys and who are the bad guys. Like Jim Steinberg said, you're intervening on behalf of whom?

Two is the idea that Ambassador Gotlieb mentioned, the idea of moving from a surgical intervention to regime change.

And three, I'm going to give a point of view from Mexico, which is not a permanent member of the Security Council, as the United States is, and which is not a member of NATO, as Canada is.

On the first point, selectivity. Of course, international politics is conducted according to the interests of the countries that have the upper hand in decisions, that is not a surprise. Everybody conducts themselves in that way.

The reason there has not been an intervention in Chechnya is because Russia is a powerful member of the U.N. Security Council. The reason there has not been an intervention in Gaza is because there are other powerful members of the Security Council who would prevent that, but then again, it highlights the fact that there's a high degree of selectivity in choosing when, where, how, to intervene.

I want to commend the work that was done by Canada ten years ago, specifically by Lloyd Axworthy, and he mentioned that it's the 10th anniversary of the work done by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty.

But I also want to highlight this particular point that doesn't belong in the theoretical discussion, or in the discussion of the conception of R2P, which I feel very identified with, but there's a caveat always in the specific implementation of these principles.

So when does R2P become an alibi for military operations beyond the original mandate? When does
it become an alibi for the goals of a state, or a certain state, rather than the supreme rule of protecting citizens? Those are the questions that have to be addressed.

For the next point, who makes the final decision on behalf of the international community? There is some sense of self-righteousness in saying, we're the good guys, we know who's on the good side, so we'll decide how and when we will intervene. From a country that is not part of that collectivity and is not part of that sphere, those are the questions that are raised.

This is a very tricky issue for all Mexicans because we have a long tradition of non-intervention, and self-determination, and so forth. Now, that is an alibi for not assuming your own responsibilities vis a vis the international community. This whole debate on the BRICs and on developing countries who want to graduate and become part of the elite in the international community makes us take a second look at power sharing, on the one hand, but also burden sharing. If you want to be part of the community that makes the vital decisions in the international community, then you have to assume some responsibilities.

I served in the Mexican Congress, and we've had a never-ending debate in the Mexican Congress about peacekeeping operations. Mexico does not want to be part of any peacekeeping operation because we don't want to send troops abroad because we believe, deep inside, that that will imply troops being sent to Mexico for whatever reason. And sharing a 2,000-mile border with the United States, believe me, that is an issue and it can be seen from different perspectives.

I am from the North, and I have discussed the situation of criminal bands of transnational organized crime in Northern Mexico. After one of the Republican debates when Governor Rick Perry said that we're going to send troops to Mexico, believe me, that in radio stations all along Northern Mexico, people resonated with that idea. Of course, the U.S. Embassy on Paseo de la Reforma and the State Department, didn't share Governor Perry's perspective, but many citizens in Northern Mexico said, whoa, there's a responsibility to protect us.

It's not our government that is terrorizing us. It's not our government that is threatening our peace and quiet and tranquility in Tampico or in Monterey or in Torreon, but it is organized crime, and it's unbearable, so do something. Help us. If our government cannot protect us, have our neighbors protect us.

You can imagine what kind of debate that stirs in Mexico, and we never reach a conclusion on this debate because when we're about to debate a specific bill, there's some fight in the Camara de Diputados or in the Senate that prevents us from reaching a decision.

So we're largely spectators of a debate in which we do not play an active role. In that regard, it is easier to point fingers and say, oh no, the imperialists are behaving the usual way. Or saying, when we take that position, we will act responsibly and we will deliver the goods to fulfilling our responsibilities with the international community, and I'll stop here.

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