

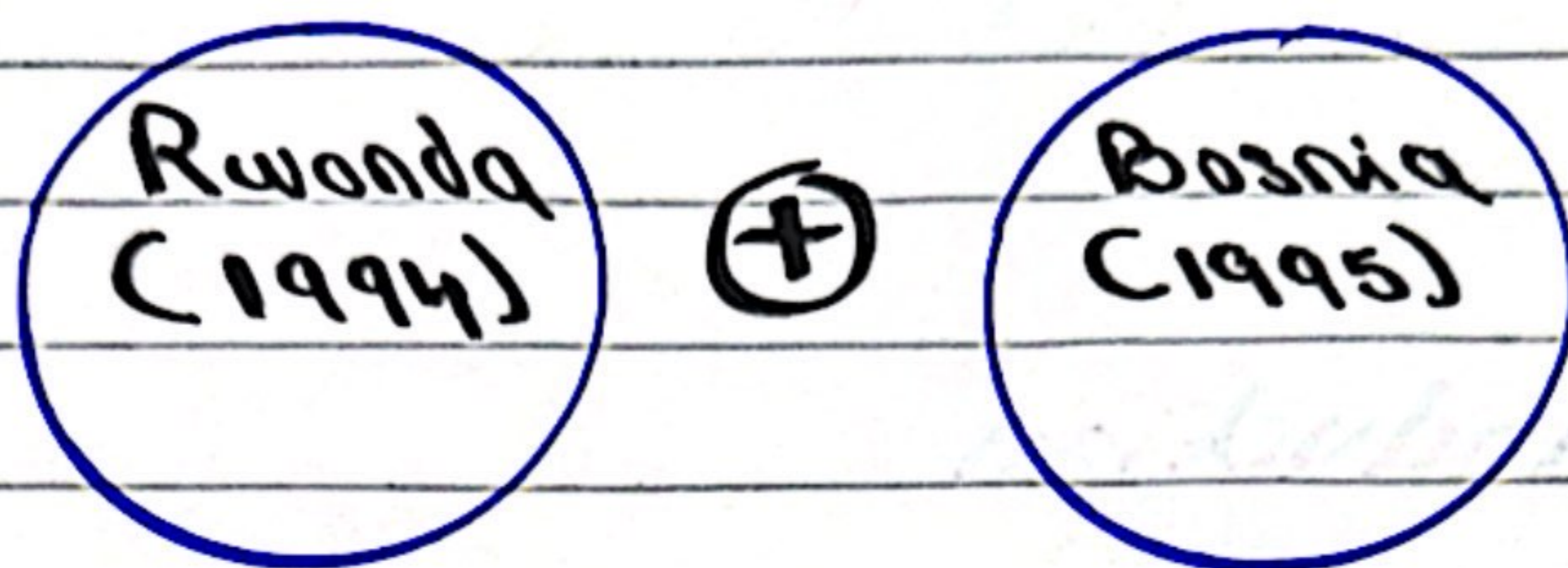
1. Introduction

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is a global political commitment inspired by liberal institutionalism thought. It was formally adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2005 to address mass atrocities, including genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. R2P redefines the concept of state sovereignty as it emphasises on the responsibility to protect populations. The principle aims at balancing state sovereignty with the international moral and legal obligations. As Kofi Annan stated, "Sovereignty now is a charge of responsibility."

2. The Concept and Framework of R2P

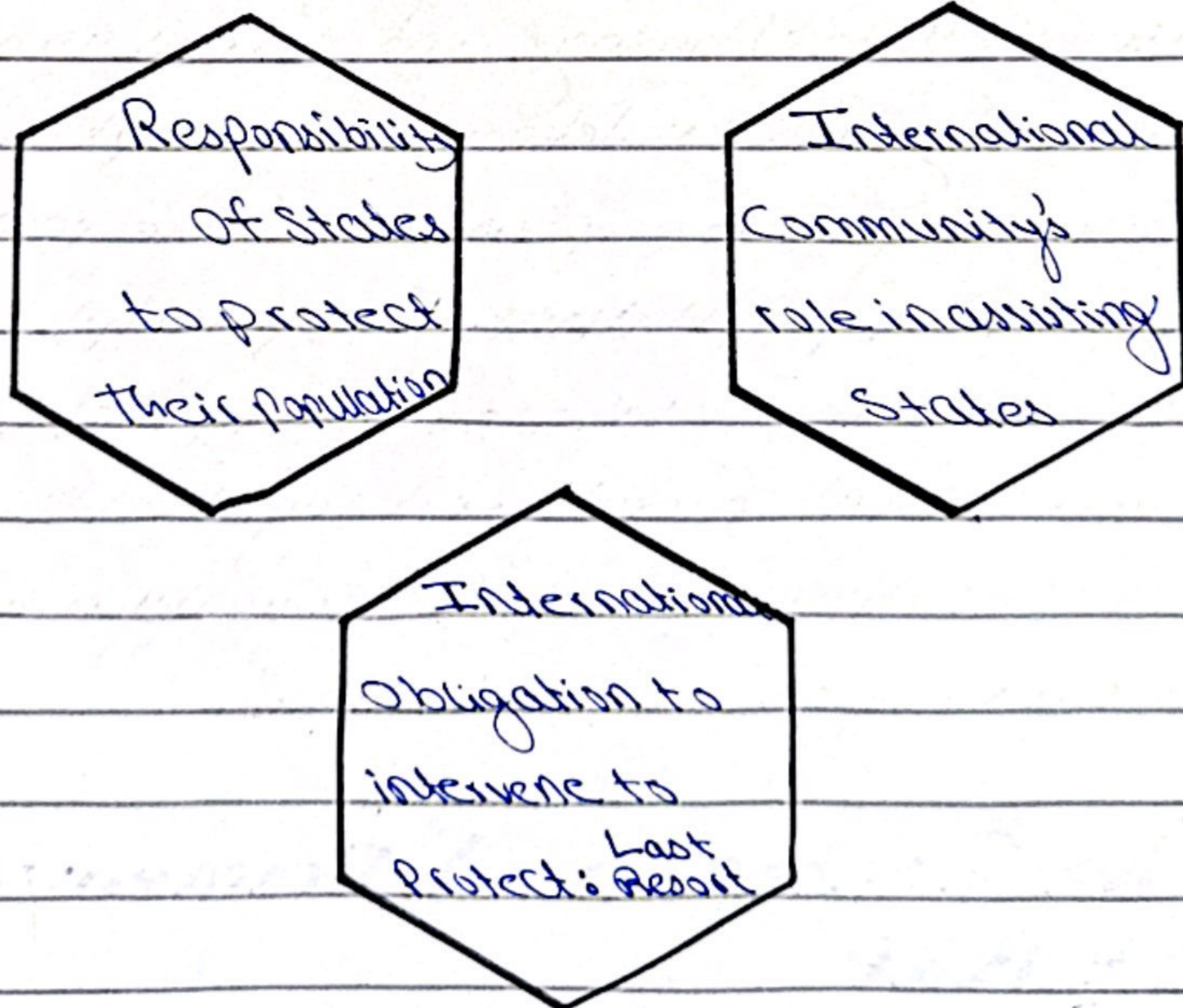
2.1) Origin of R2P

R2P emerged from the failure of the international community to prevent atrocities:



Thus R2P was formalised under the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome Document

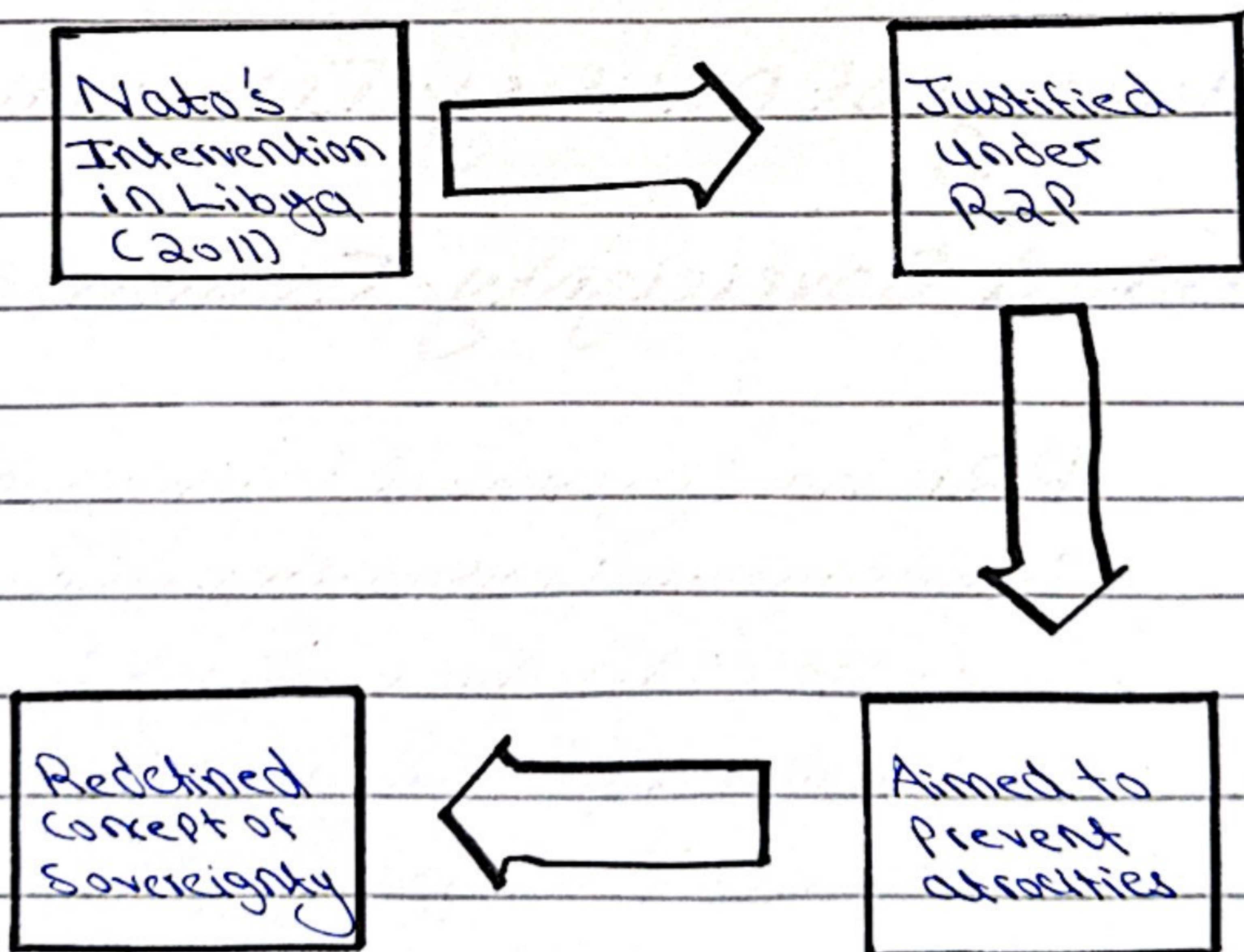
2.2 Pillars of R2P - International Norms



3. Implication of R2P on International Relations

i) Redefinition of Sovereignty

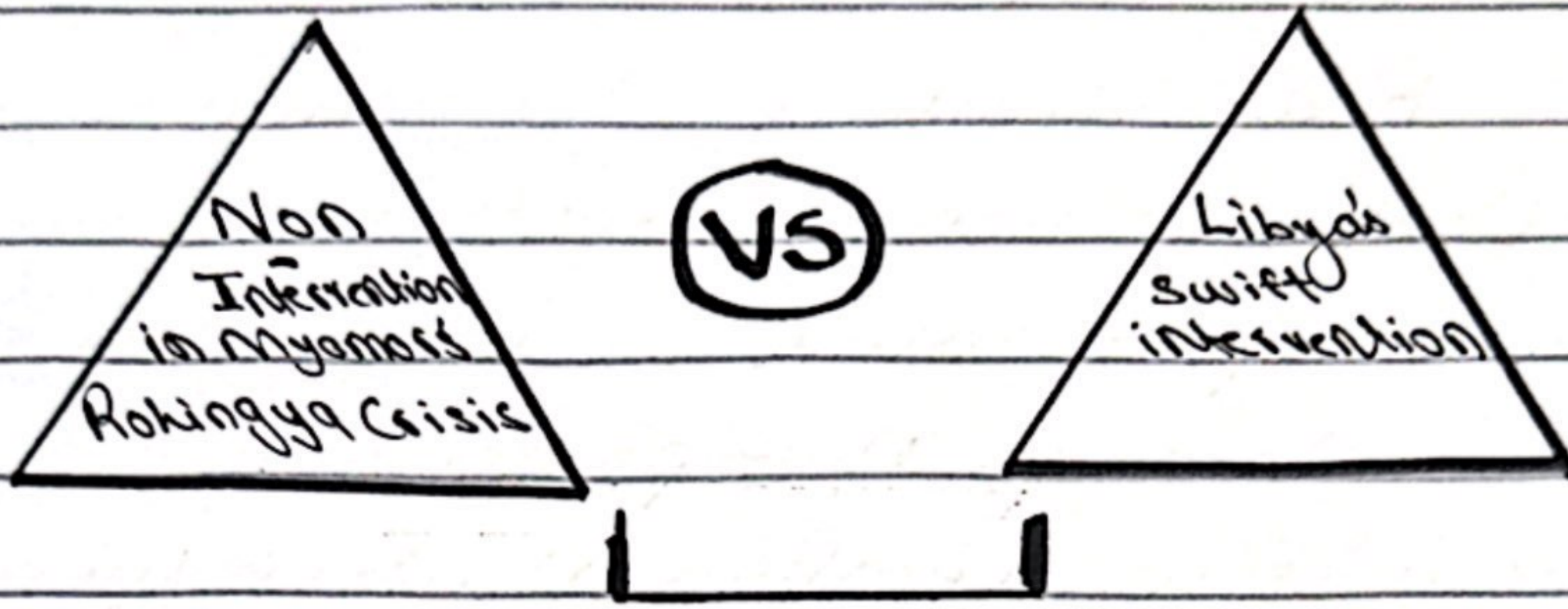
R2P challenges the traditional Westphalian notion of absolute sovereignty. It asserts prioritising human rights over state autonomy. The principle is inspired from Liberalism which emphasises cooperation and moral obligations through institutions, which in this case is The UN.



ii) Normative Selectivity in Enforcement

Criticism on R2P revolves around its application inconsistency. The

R2P reflects geopolitical realism as major powers intervene not solely on the basis of fostering international cooperation but rather for strategic interests.



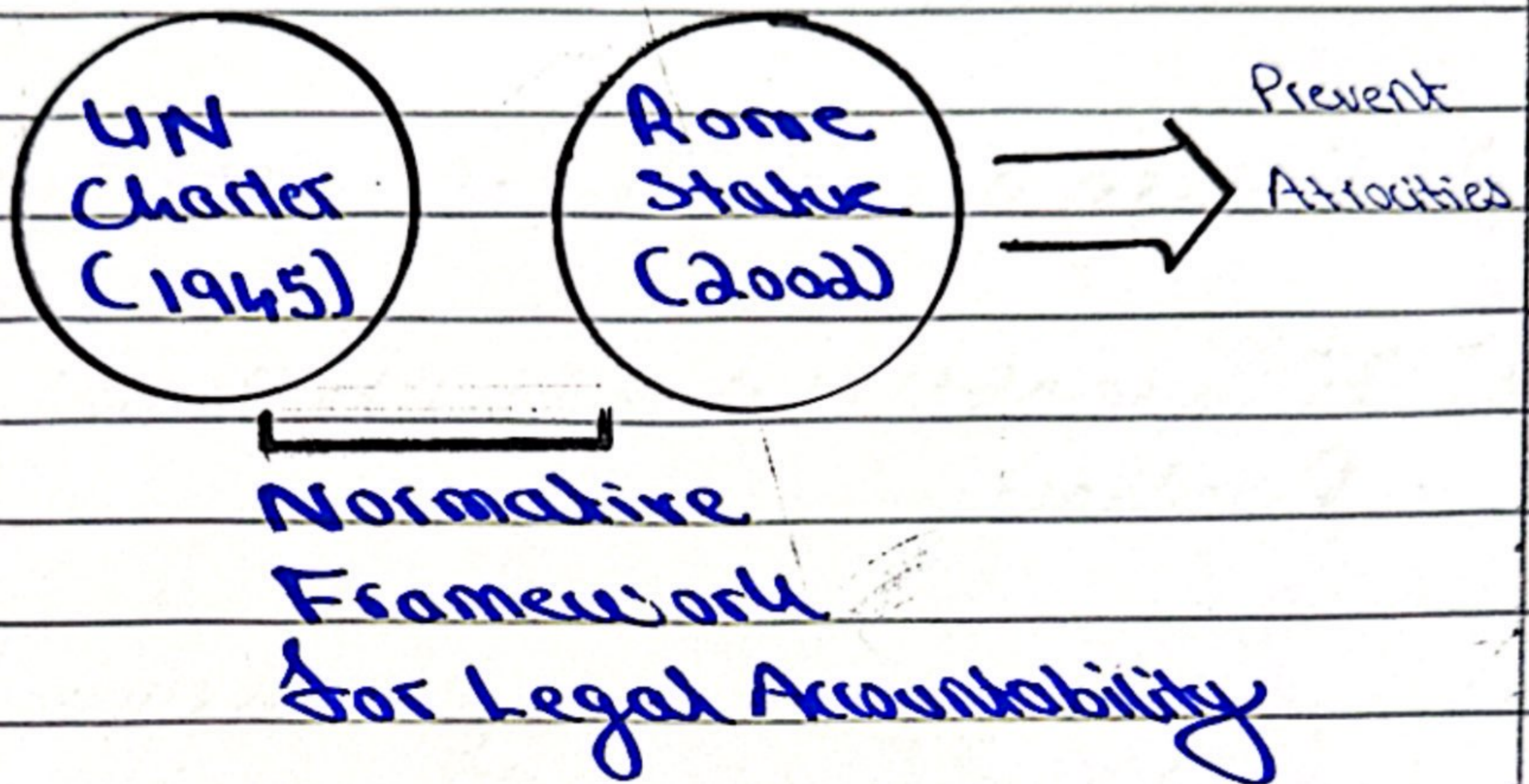
Manifestation of Geopolitical Realism

iii) Legitimacy of Military Intervention: Potential Sovereignty Erosion

R2P has legitimised interventions providing humanitarian justifications. However, the practice at times has been exploited for regime change objectives leading to sovereignty erosion. For example, the Iraq War (2003) lacked R2P justification but was utilised as a defence later. The 2003 event highlights R2P's potential of misuse under false pretence.

iv) Strengthening International Law

R2P reinforces the role of international law.



4. Application of R2P in The Middle East Crisis

4.1 Humanitarian ~~East~~ Crisis in Middle East: Context

Since 2024 Israel-Gaza war and Israel-Lebanon war has resulted in large-scale civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of infrastructure. Approximately 46,000 civilian casualties are reported in Gaza. UN agencies have raised concern over potential war crimes due to indiscriminate airstrikes targeting

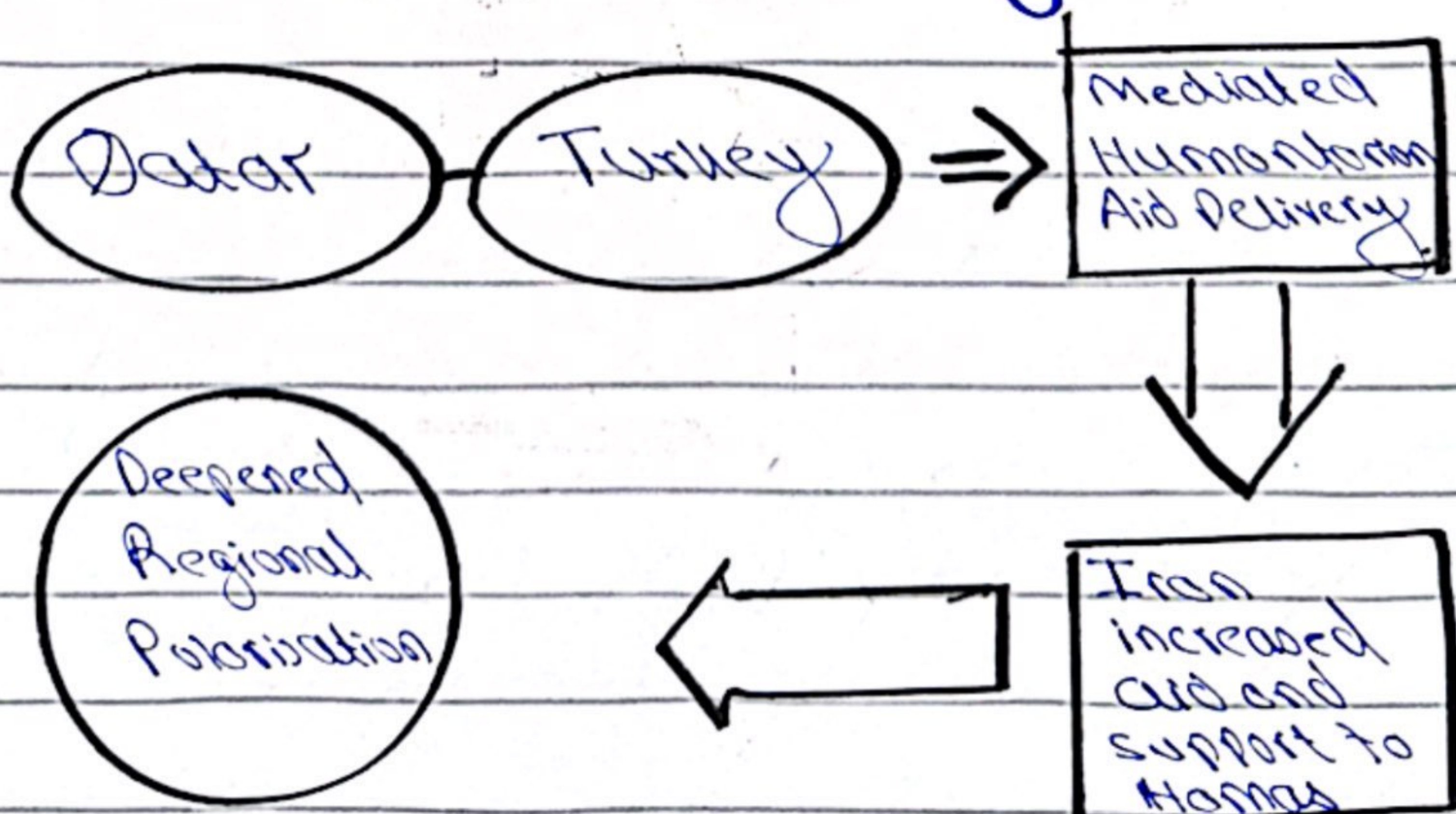
non-combatants and absence of proportionality in Israel's response to Hamas Attack in Oct, 2023. The humanitarian crisis demands civilian protection norms enforcement under R2P.

4.2 International Response to The Crisis

i) Failure of UN due to veto Power Peadlock

The UN Security Council (UNSC) failed to pass resolutions calling for a ceasefire due to U.S vetoes leading to institutional paralysis. The UNSC's inaction in countering U.S vetoes reflects selective enforcement of R2P.

ii) Varied Response of Regional Actors



Realism explains the varied response from regional actors. As per Realism, regional powers struggled in shaping unified response which focused on ceasefire and humanitarian aid access due to prioritising national interests (power) over humanitarian concerns.

iii) Realist Calculations of Western Powers

Western nations, particularly the U.S emphasized Israel's right to self defense as per Article 51 of UN Charter (1945). This led to blocking calls for R2P intervention in Gaza and Lebanon. This reflects R2P is undermined by realpolitik and strategic calculations conducted on the basis of realist principles.

iv) Civil Society and Non-State Actors

Human rights organisations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch called for R2P-based intervention along with International Criminal Court's investigation into war crimes. However, it failed to gain traction due to lack of

enforcement mechanisms, reflecting weakness of liberalism's tools to attain peace.

4.3 Implications of R2P in The Crisis

Erosion of R2P's Credibility

Normative Deficit and Humanitarian Hypocrisy

Selective Application - A tool for Western Hegemony

Ineffectiveness of Liberal Advocated Multilateralism

Regional Polarisation, Realignment, Increased Section Divides

The Failure of R2P in Middle East Crisis doth highlights broader shift towards Multipolarity due to selective enforcement which supports China's and Russia's anti-Western Hegemony realist stance.

5. Conclusion

While R2P advocates to protect vulnerable populations, its selective application and move as a political tool of great power competition undermines its credibility. The doth Middle East crisis reflects R2P's failure to uphold peace due to geopolitical rivalries and institutional inertia, highlighting structural weakness of liberal institutionalism and rule-based world order.