



**HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION AND RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT:
THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES-LED INTERVENTION IN IRAQ**

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ABSTRACT

Under the Public International Law, intervening in the internal affairs of another state for whatever reason has been one of the most discussed and hotly debated areas as long as the laws of nations were developed. In recent times, the application of the principles of Humanitarian Intervention and later, Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in crisis situations have proven highly contentious, controversial and elusive as the global community has in no time agreed on the legal justifications proffered by the intervening states or coalition of states. Evidently, the decisions by the US and the Coalition of the willing states to intervene in Iraq in 2003 have been subjected to much legal scrutiny and debates. Consequently, this paper examines the background and motivations of the US-led action against Iraq and the dichotomous legal position of humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect. The study adopts a descriptive/comparative approach and gathered data essentially from books, journal articles, reports from international humanitarian organizations and the Internet. Findings from the study revealed that the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US-led Coalition of the willing does not represent a real case of humanitarian intervention and the principles of R2P. While the existing framework must be re-appraised to effectively address the misinterpretation and application of HI and R2P in crisis situations, effective multilateral collective security organization for its implementation is a desideratum

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