**Centre for Chinese Law  
中國法研究中心  
Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong**

**The “Responsibility to Protect”: Issues and Challenges**

**Dr. Alberto Costi**

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**Time: 1:30-2:30 pm, 10 March 2015**

**Venue: A825, 8/F, Cheng Yu Tung Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU**

Abstract：

Despite its general endorsement by more than 150 Heads of state and government at the UN World Summit in 2005, the idea that states have the primary responsibility to protect their own citizens, but when they are unwilling or unable to do so, that responsibility must be borne by the international community of states, the “responsibility to protect” (R2P), remains a contentious issue in international law. For some, R2P has allowed the international community to respond and contain existing crises (for instance, in Darfur and Côte d’Ivoire). For others, the hesitation of the international community to take action in Syria casts doubt on its legal character. Many questions remain regarding the nature and dimensions of R2P, the situations triggering R2P, and the measures that may be taken to prevent, or react to, a humanitarian catastrophe. The paper will attempt to define the status and scope of R2P, document efforts undertaken to implement it and identify the challenges confronting the international community in protecting the consensus achieved in 2005. In conclusion, the paper will explore the national and international measures that must be taken to nurture R2P and to ensure that its implementation serves humanitarian goals rather than the political interests of individual states.

About the speaker：

Alberto Costi is an Associate Professor of Law at Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand. His main research interests are in public international law, with specializations in the law of armed conflict and international environmental law. He acts as the editor and main author of the first ever textbook on international law from a New Zealand perspective (to be published later this year). He is a member of the New Zealand International Humanitarian Law Committee, serves as Secretary-General of the International Law Association New Zealand Branch and Vice-President of the New Zealand Association for Comparative Law, and sits on the editorial boards of six peer-reviewed journals. He holds degrees from the Université de Montréal, the College of Europe and Harvard Law School. Former professional commitments include a judicial clerkship at the Supreme Court of Canada, academic positions at Keele University in England and at the Central European University in Budapest, and visiting professorships in Montenegro and Kirgyzstan, at the University of Western Ontario in Canada and at the College of Law of the University of Iowa in the United States. He was a Visiting Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford in 1998-1999.