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MYRES S. MCDUGAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

**THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER INTERNATIONAL  
LAW: WILL THE U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND THE  
EMERGING NEW NORM “RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT” MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE?**

VED P. NANDA \*

I.

I will begin with a tribute to Professor Myres S. McDougal, who was the reason I went to Yale Law School. After receiving an LLM. at Northwestern with Professor Brunson McChesney as my advisor, my years at Yale (1962-65) were the most enjoyable of my student life. An inspiring teacher, a creative scholar, and a lifelong friend, Professor McDougal will always be my role model, and I am deeply honored to give this lecture, established at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law in my mentor's name.

Professor McDougal had attracted brilliant and creative minds to Yale – Harold Lasswell, Egon Schwelb, and Oscar Schachter, among others. Each one of these teachers left a lasting impact on me. Dr. Schwelb taught what I understand was the first ever course on international human rights law in any law school, when the only course materials available were UN documents related to draft international treaties on which Dr. Schwelb was working at the UN Headquarters. While taking that seminar I decided that when I started teaching I was going to introduce human rights as a separate course and my colleagues graciously permitted me to do so here at DU in the 1960s. My passion for human rights goes back to that period.

It is inherent in our being human that no matter who we are and where we live, we are entitled to the enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. And there is universal acceptance of the international law norm that human rights of all, irrespective of their sex, race, ethnicity, religion, language,

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\* Vice Provost and John Evans University Professor, University of Denver; Thompson G. Marsh Professor of Law and Director, International Legal Studies Program, University of Denver Sturm College of Law. This is a revised and updated version of the 2006 Myres S. McDougal Distinguished Lecture delivered at the Sturm College of Law. I am grateful to my colleague Sergio Stone, International and Comparative Law Librarian at the College of Law, for making available official documents. I would also like to express my gratitude for the College's summer research grant, which allowed me to complete the manuscript.