

**Statement by Ambassador Hahn Choonghee
Chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Korea**

**Informal Interactive Dialogue on Responsibility to Protect
General Assembly**

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<As Delivered>

Mr. Moderator

The Republic of Korea aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the Group of Friends on R2P, and wishes to add the following remarks in its national capacity. Let me also congratulate you on being appointed as Secretary-General's new Special Advisor on R2P. You can count on our support for your endeavor in this new capacity.

At the outset, I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's informal interactive dialogue and his considerable efforts to advance the cause of R2P. We also thank the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his personal commitment and conviction to this principle. His most recent report – the eighth report covering different aspects of R2P since 2009 – is particularly well received, for its strong call to action and vision for collective action to safeguard humanity and further strengthen accountability.

Mr. Moderator,

While acknowledging that great strides have been made over the last decade, we must also recognize that there still remains a gap between our aspirations to protect vulnerable populations and the reality on the ground. The disgraceful scale of forced displacement today is directly related to our collective failure to prevent mass atrocity crimes in these parts of the world. We simply must do better to overcome certain “barriers to implementation” as identified in the Secretary-General's report.

A number of speakers throughout the day have emphasized the role of the General Assembly. The Republic of Korea, as part of the group of Member States that advocated that R2P should be placed in the agenda of the General Assembly, would support this argument. After all, by placing R2P on the General Assembly agenda, we are not seeking to re-define or re-create R2P. We are simply asking to discuss the existing set of international norms.

The Republic of Korea has been an ardent supporter of the principle of R2P. As a State Party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, we support the French-Mexican initiative and the ACT Code of Conduct call for the restraint in the use of the veto. Furthermore, as one of the first Asian member states to appoint a national focal point on R2P, the Republic of Korea has consistently advocated the need for effective implementation and strengthening the early warning capacity of R2P across the UN system.

This year, we demonstrated our commitment by co-hosting the 6th Annual Meeting of the Global Network of R2P Focal Points in Seoul with Timor-Leste, marking the first meeting of its kind held in Asia. What made this year's meeting all the more significant was that it was attended by not only those Member States in Asia that has appointed a national focal point – namely, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Timor Leste – but also by many governments in the region that have yet to appoint a national focal point.

With 55 member states and the EU represented by national focal points, this growing Global Network has become an instrument of strengthening institutional capacities at national, regional, and global levels. We echo the call to other member states to join this growing network of R2P focal points.

Finally, we look forward to working with the future Secretary General in upholding and strengthening R2P in a global environment where it is more relevant than ever. 10 of the 16 current UN peacekeeping missions are mandated to support host states in protecting civilian populations.

If the UN is to remain relevant in upholding the fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law, it must transcend political self-interest and insist on accountability. The determined, consistent and effective implementation of R2P can go a long way towards achieving this goal, not only in the well-known conflict zones, but also in those repressive regimes where mass atrocity crimes occur in the shadows.

As we enter into another decade for the Responsibility to Protect, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to contribute in further solidifying the progress made since the World Summit Outcome. Looking ahead of the next session of the General Assembly with much emphasis placed on prevention of conflict, the Republic of Korea will continue to work to prevent the most egregious crimes from taking place. Thank you. /END/