

Statement delivered by Guatemala – Informal Interactive dialogue on R2P, 6 September 2017  
[TRANSLATION]

We'd like to thank the President of the General Assembly for conducting this Informal Dialogue to discuss the Responsibility to Protect. We'd also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report. We'd like also to thank today's panelists for their presentations this morning.

Like other countries in Latin America, my country has suffered from military dictatorships over long periods of time. It could be discussed as to whether the indescribable crimes committed, in some cases, do meet this category of genocide or crimes against humanity. But the point is that after the long night of authoritarian rule in our region, governments are now in power, including our own, which are prepared to take on their own responsibility to protect and respect human rights.

Some of the so-called truth commissions established when democracy arrived have published reports called "Never Again." This includes Guatemala. We consider that it is time for the community of nations together to say, "never again" to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity and all human suffering. Flagrant cases over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have showed us that we are in situations which could fall into one of these categories. This is also occurring the first seventy years of this century.

The situation is pressing and we have moved forward in conceptual terms and doctrinal terms but there is still a long way to go if our aspirations are to become effective and that never again will this type of abuse will be committed. We know that there is a gap between declared commitments on the Responsibility to Protect and the real situation in everyday life which leaves people exposed to risks genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We are pleased to see the report from the Secretary-General does contain a number of practical measures which the member states could adopt, as could the intergovernmental bodies and the United Nations system, in order to guarantee accountability with regard to preventing atrocity crimes. We are pleased to see the close relationship between legal, moral and political responsibilities and the Responsibility to Protect and the various forms of accountability. We also recognize that collective responsibility to help states to meet their primary responsibilities and use diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful measures under Chapters 6 and 8 of the Charter are crucial. This will mean that such crimes are not committed again and populations are protected from such crimes. In cases of peaceful measures not being adequate and populations not being protected on a number of occasions, Guatemala has said that it would be timely to undertake collective actions in a decisive and timely way, as under the United Nations Charter and Chapter 7 of this.

Moderator,

I will try to be brief still. It is unfortunate that the Security Council has approved over 50 resolutions referring to Responsibility to Protect and reaffirmed the principle at least 6 times, the Human Rights Council has also adopted over 20 resolutions which refer to the Responsibility to

Protect, but the General Assembly has only adopted one resolution on this in 2009 and it was only procedural in nature. As the most represented and democratic organ in the United Nations, the General Assembly must be a space for discussions to strengthen the protection of people against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Moderator,

Guatemala is working hard toward preventing atrocity crimes and currently in the congress of promoting a draft law 4998. This will approve the law for implementation of the International Criminal Court rule and recognize its competence. Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to the Responsibility to Protect. My country will actively continue to promote and defend this.