

Statement of Mexico  
Unofficial Translation from Official Statement  
11 September 2013

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Mr. President:

My delegation wishes to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this debate, and the distinguished panelists who, with their interventions, have set the tone for this important discussion.

We also thank the Secretary-General for the presentation of his Report, focused on the first Pillar of the Responsibility to Protect and the responsibility of each State to prevent atrocities from being committed against their people.

Mr. President:

Undoubtedly, the heart of the Responsibility to Protect is precisely prevention, it is the manner to prevent people from suffering as a result of atrocities, preventing them before they happen or preventing any recurrence where they have already. In this regard, the Secretary-General's Report provides a good starting point to identify the potential risk factors that can cause a humanitarian crisis. The more we know and understand about the causes that lead to conflict, the better we can prevent and respond to that potential scenario.

Perhaps the most important material reason for prevention is the degree of application as well as the controversy that this represents. For that reason it is distinguished in the Secretary-General's Report, regarding conflict prevention and the prevention of atrocities. While it is true that a climate of conflict can make it susceptible to commit atrocities, history shows that they [mass atrocities] are also made in the absence of conflicts. We agree that "the atrocity crimes are a process, not a single event." This reflection is useful to address more adequately assess the causes that could lead to perpetration of international crimes.

As has been expressed in the Report, the breadth and the scope of prevention involves a commitment on different fronts, including fighting discrimination and poverty, also the strengthening of the rule of law and in particular, human rights. This is in fact the fifth risk factor identified by the Secretary-General, it refers to weak legislative protection in the area of human rights.

In this respect, Mr. President, allow me to share the recent experience of my country in this area. In June 2011, following an extensive consultation process, Mexico passed a far-reaching reform to the Constitution which granted constitutional status to human rights [laws] contained in international treaties to which my country is a party.

This reform not only reiterated the importance of human rights to Mexico, but involved the strengthening of the judiciary, [which is] responsible for ensuring the broadest protection to the people. Moreover, last week, the Supreme Court upheld human rights in the prevalence of international law in cases in which it granted broader protection than the was called for in the Constitution itself.

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However, in order to consolidate a genuine rule of law, strengthening policy must be accompanied by institutional fortification. A greater democratic openness leads to greater transparency, greater civil society participation in decision-making and greater accountability.

Regarding the participation of civil society, my delegation appreciates the recognition given in the Report to the recent adoption of the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders Persons and Journalists. We are convinced that the more extensive the participation of citizens, stronger the social pact that would be to prevent conflicts and atrocities.

Regarding the critical path for us to follow in the future, my delegation believes that the measures proposed in paragraph 71 of the Report, provide a good basis to build prevention systems.

However, we believe that we should add also the commitment of states to favor the peaceful settlement of disputes. Acceptance of, for example, the jurisdiction of international tribunals, especially in human rights and the International Criminal Court, will serve to deter the commission of atrocities.

Mr. President:

While we recognize that the guiding principle of our discussion is the Report of the Secretary-General, it is inevitable in the current situation, to address the humanitarian crisis in Arab Republic of Syria, where the conflict has killed hundreds of thousands of people [and displaced] one third of the population and more than two million refugees, of whom half are children . Syria exemplifies one of the main challenges for prevention in the framework of the First Pillar of the Responsibility to Protect identified in the report: the lack of political will.

Unfortunately, the Report we are discussing only deplors the failure to prevent the commission of atrocities in [Syria], but it does not offer an analysis of the flaws in the prevention system [in general]. This is a good time to reflect on precisely this in order to prevent recurrence of such deficiencies.

The debate invites us to think, for example, if the situation we face today, would have been different with the implementation of the seven suggested actions to prevent in the Report. We note the intention of the Secretary-General to address the Second Pillar of the Responsibility to Protect in the next report.

Since this relates to the international community's responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means to prevent atrocities and international crimes, we expect the process of reflection to continue, allowing us to identify a list of lessons learned to enable us to reinvigorate responsiveness and avoid dramatic crisis in the future as it is today in Syria. Mexico in turn will support and work for finding a peaceful and effective solution to end the conflict in Syria.

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The value of the Responsibility to Protect resides, doubtlessly, in the constant call for a need to take on our R2P as organized entities governed by international law to act in the face of wretched acts of war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

This is a crucial moment in which we live in, we make a sincere call for the consciousness of the humanity and international law to prevail, where the well-being of the Syrian people is the only objective, always bearing in mind that we are all 'contributing' to the Responsibility to Protect.

Thank you very much.