

R2P interactive debate – GA – Portugal

Ambassador JF Moraes Cabral

5 September 2012

Let me welcome Adama Djeng as the new Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide. I wish also to thank Francis Deng and Ed Luck for their outstanding contribution on this matter and acknowledge the important work of the NGO community and “think tanks” that have helped the international community to deepen the understanding and develop the concept, including the important Brazilian initiative on RWP.

I wish to highlight the following 3 points:

1. To thank the SG for his report. It is a comprehensive report reflecting the increasing maturity of the RtoP concept. Clearly centers the concept in its right context: the 2005 consensus. Highlights the “lessons learned” which give us important guidance for its future implementation (important set of lessons learned could perfectly justify deeper development and discussion, bearing in mind their relevance for a better implementation and efficacy of RtoP). And identifies not only the tools available under chapter VI, VII and VIII, but also the available partners for implementation of R2P.
2. To highlight the crucial importance of prevention. Prevention is a cross cutting issue in all the 3 pillars. As mentioned in the report, prevention is also an inherent part - one of the most important parts - of the 3rd pillar, something we should not forget. The number of preventive tools available for implementation under the UN Charter listed in the report is a reminder of that. But Pillar 3 is also Chapter VII and coercive measures and the international community, and in particular the SC, should be able to timely and effectively discharge its responsibility to protect, whenever the conditions are met and the situations so require.

3. Such coercive response has to be responsible. On sanctions, the international community developed over the last two decades better tools: targeted sanctions which responded to a legitimate claim of targeted oriented coercive measures, also called smart sanctions, which implied a more “responsible” way of the use of sanctions by the international community and SC. The Brazilian initiative on RtoP builds on the same idea of a responsible way to implement RtoP, a “responsible protection”, which in our view merits our attention as well. More responsible RtoP implementation, in all its pillars, means indeed more efficacy, thus better results.

4. In conclusion, if we recognize that the concept of Responsibility to Protect is becoming increasingly accepted, with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council referring to it in several different cases, we must at the same time also recognize that there has been some controversy where coercive measures have been used to protect populations. The discussion around the concept of Responsibility *while* Protecting, put forward by Brazil, could help, in our view, to reducing the lingering doubts and tensions about the implementation of the Third Pillar of RtoP and thus further contribute to its growing acceptance and help dispel hesitations in the “response”, when necessary.

What we do not want is for the international community to hesitate to discharge its responsibility to protect, on account of doubts over its “responsible” implementation.