



**STATEMENT**

by

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to the United Nations**

**Informal interactive dialogue on the report of the Secretary-General on the responsibility  
to protect**

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**-Check against delivery-**

Mr Chairman,

First, I would like to thank Mr Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and President of the General Assembly John Ash for their introductory words. I would also like to thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and other panellists for their inspired thoughts.

At the outset, I would like to align myself with the statement presented earlier by the distinguished representative of the European Union.

Slovakia highly appreciates the insightful **report on the Pillar II assistance** prepared by the Secretary-General. We believe that with the coming tenth anniversary of the concept of Responsibility to Protect the time has come to reflect on both, what the international community has done and what it needs to do to meet its collective duty to protect civilians from atrocity crimes.

The creation of the concept was a reaction to genocide in **Rwanda** and **Srebrenica**. In these two cases the international community failed to prevent probably the worst atrocity crimes committed after World War II. Unfortunately, more recent examples such as the use of **chemical weapons in Syria** and the increase in brutality of **radical movements such as Boko Haram and ISIS** indicate that we still have a long way to go in increasing capacity of national and international cooperation in prevention of atrocities and protection of civilians.

Today with the benefit of hindsight, we are discussing the second pillar of R2P on how the actions of international community can prevent from repetitions of these horrible crimes. Although we should never forget the initial uncertain beginnings of the incorporation of Responsibility to Protect into practice, the recent developments speak clearly of the **progress we have made in the course of last decade**.

Let's not speak on the negative note only. The **assistance provided to Colombia** by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights which helped establish independent intelligence services in the state or the **UN peace operation in South Sudan** are but two examples of the concept's successful implementation.

Mr Chairman,

It is in the interest of the international community as a whole to adhere to the word and spirit of our Pillar II obligations. As much as we acknowledge that Responsibility to Protect is based on the principle of collective action, we feel it important to emphasise the **consensual nature** of the Pillar II assistance. Pillar II is inherently linked to **Pillar I state's primary responsibility to protect** its own population from atrocity crimes. Only and exclusively with the consent of the host state and preferably upon its own request, may the international community make use of its Pillar II responsibility.

The encouragement and assistance provided by the international community must fully respect **state sovereignty**. Resolution 1996 on the establishment of a UN peace operation in South Sudan as well as Resolution 2014 that reminded the government of Yemen of its primary responsibility to protect its own civilian population may serve as telling examples of how respect for state sovereignty is inherent in the spirit of Pillar II.

Mr Chairman,

The underlying rationale of Pillar II assistance is the idea of **prevention**. Rather than addressing past crimes, any encouragement, capacity building or protection assistance should aim to **prevent atrocity crimes from being committed**. To this end, several precursors of an arising conflict can be identified. The extent to which **Human Rights standards** are upheld in a host state may serve as an effective indicator of a forthcoming conflict.

**Slovakia** strongly encourages the establishment of monitoring bodies that would closely screen Human Rights situation on the ground. With periodical reports, Human Rights standards may become not only the main elements of Responsibility to Protect, but also the key triggers of the Pillar II collective obligations.

When it comes to prevention, **the role of the International Criminal Court is indispensable**. It serves not only as an independent and impartial judicial body prosecuting situations where national jurisdiction is unable or unwilling to address the issue of accountability, but through its authority has a preventive impact. In this regard, we call on all UN member states who have not yet done so to ratify the Rome Statute and its amendments and thus help achieve its full universality.

With the beginning of year 2015 **the decade will have passed since the birth of the concept of Responsibility to Protect**. Such anniversary calls for an advancement in our commitments. Far from being completed, our efforts to achieve the full implementation of Responsibility to Protect must progress to a higher level. **Slovakia** believes that the time has come for Responsibility to Protect to become one of the main concepts in the agenda of the General Assembly.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.