



CROATIA

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Statement by

**H.E. Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak
Permanent Representative of
the Republic of Croatia**

at the

**Informal interactive dialogue on the
Responsibility to Protect**

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Mr President,

Allow me at the outset to thank you for convening a dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect, an issue which epitomizes the very purpose of this Organization.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union, and I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

We appreciate and share the views expressed in Secretary-General's report on "*Mobilizing collective action: The next decade of the responsibility to protect*" and wish to thank him for placing the advancement of the responsibility to protect at the core of his engagement, in our joint efforts to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

We would at the same time call for the next Secretary-General to make R2P one of his or her core priorities, and to further build on the achievements of the *Human Rights Up Front* initiative.

In addition, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the effort invested and work carried out by Secretary General's special adviser on R2P Ms. Jennifer Welsh and we congratulate Mr. Ivan Šimonović on being appointed as her successor.

Mr President,

When it comes to further success in advancing this important agenda, we must firstly remind ourselves that we are faced with a frightening reality of unprecedented suffering caused by conflicts in many parts of the world, and thus we have a duty to act when and where the lives of civilians are threatened.

We must also recognize as a severe global threat the emergence of violent extremists and non-state armed groups who brazenly defy international humanitarian law and glorify their crimes, thus undermining the fundamental principles of our common humanity.

A worrying decline in compliance with international law, including intentional attacks on schools, hospitals, humanitarian workers, peacekeepers and journalists, is deeply disturbing.

In this context, we reiterate that conflict prevention and sustaining peace must lie at the core of all our efforts to ensure protection of civilians. This involves reading with attention early signs, and the effective elimination of root causes of conflict, starting with the lack of development, justice and respect for human rights. The *Framework of Analysis of Atrocity Crimes* is certainly an important tool in this regard.

Similarly, we add to the calls for ensuring coherence between R2P and other processes, which go beyond Agenda 2030 to also include peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and disarmament.

Mr President,

We have stated on multiple occasions that the protection of civilians is first and foremost a responsibility of national authorities. However, the international community has to take on its part of the responsibility for protection, and take collective action through the Security Council if and when national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations.

Croatia fully supports the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as the French-Mexican initiative on the suspension of the veto power in cases of mass atrocities.

Of critical importance is also ensuring compliance with the obligations of all parties under international humanitarian law and ensuring accountability when atrocities do occur. Croatia recalls the further strengthening of the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to take a strong responsibility in prosecuting atrocity crimes committed by State armies or Non-State Actors.

Global and regional networks have become an integral part of the institutional architecture in encouraging and assisting States to implement the responsibility to protect. Member States have an integral role to play in building capacities, but also should exercise a greater willingness to share sensitive information on risk factors.

It is in this regard crucial to develop comprehensive protection strategies in close consultation with the host Government, local authorities, contributing countries, the civil society and other relevant actors.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our support for the adoption of a substantive General Assembly resolution on the Responsibility to Protect, as well as for placing the annual dialogue on the formal agenda of the General Assembly, as small, but significant steps in translating principles into concrete action to protect the human life and reaffirm the principle of humanity.