

**Statement of the Arab Republic of Egypt
at the
Informal Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on the Responsibility to
Protect**

(Tuesday 6 September 2016)

Mr. President,

I would like to begin my statement by extending my thanks to the President of the General Assembly for convening this informal interactive dialogue on the 'Responsibility to Protect.' Egypt welcomes the convening of these annual meetings as they allow for the continued engagement by the General Assembly on this important matter with the aim of reaching consensus on R2P and on the way forward, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

This year we consider the eighth and final report of the current Secretary General on the responsibility to protect. More than ten years have passed since the adoption of the World Summit Outcome Document in which member states expressed their commitment to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. We would like to seize this opportunity to raise a number of points:

First, the primary responsibility to protect populations from such crimes rests with member-states. The principal role of the international community in this regard should be to encourage and assist states in fulfilling these responsibilities while respecting the principle of national ownership regarding the policies and programmes pursued. Egypt welcomes the reference in the report that there is a convergence of the views of memberstates on this very important issue.

Second, notwithstanding the noble goals which the notion of R2P seeks to achieve, we believe that R2P still contains political and legal gaps, which if left unresolved and not clearly defined would do more harm than good with regards to the universal acceptance of the principle of R2P. Currently, R2P is a broad political commitment that has yet to evolve legally. As such, it is imperative that an agreement be reached on the conceptual framework of the principle before discussing practical aspects pertaining to the operationalization of the concept. A lot of work still needs to be done to further clarify this important concept and bring it in conformity with the UN Charter and the relevant principles of international law. It is our view that such clarifications are an essential prerequisite for the inclusion of R2P on the formal agenda of the General Assembly. One such area where further clarification is required is the need to define the relationship between the three pillars for the framework of implementation of R2P. In this vein, it is our view that the three pillars should operate sequentially and not be implemented simultaneously. We welcome however the reference in the report that military means should only be a measure of last resort and upon prior authorization by the Security Council.

Third, while we fully support the view that prevention lies at the core of the responsibility to protect, we nevertheless assert that any international strategies in this regard should garner the wider support of the general membership. Failure to do so may raise suspicions of memberstates who may misconstrue such policies as tools that can be manipulated to intervene in the internal affairs of vulnerable countries for political gain. As such, any reference to non-consensual initiatives or strategies developed outside inter-

governmental processes should be avoided until they are duly considered and adopted by memberstates including the “Human Rights Upfront Initiative,” and the “Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes.” Only then can they be integrated into methodologies used by the UN system.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to assert Egypt's unwavering commitment to the concept of R2P as delineated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. In this vein, we view current interactive dialogues as essential prerequisites towards reaching a consensus on all outstanding aspects pertaining to the concept, in a manner that would enhance our ability and capacities to provide protection for vulnerable populations on the ground.

I Thank You